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BY LES ROBERTSON

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# EDITOR'S LETTER

## Eagerly Waiting

**A common thread runs throughout each of the hunting-focused stories submitted for this issue: the thrill of anticipation.**

They are signals.

The first cooler breezes that stir the hot summer months and the sunsets that come just a little earlier signal that hunting season is not far off. The hunter begins preparing — pulling out the equipment untouched since last season and readying it for the next.

But the waiting doesn't end after opening day. Crouched in bushes or on tree stands, rifle or bow in hand, he waits with inexhaustible patience for the first glimpse of his target.

Waiting, for the hunter, is not boring, but exciting. He is poised, alert, prepared. There's a certain thrill in the anticipation.

We've filled the pages of this issue with stories sure to contribute to the hunter's anticipation.

If you're a seasoned pro, you may be most interested in our reviews of some of the latest blades designed for both during and after the hunt.

If you're more of a novice, you may appreciate our expert tips for choosing and maintaining your blade to ensure optimum performance.

And if hunting just isn't your hobby, we haven't forgotten about you — you'll find our usual coverage of the latest and greatest custom, tactical and everyday carry blades as well. We know you may not be familiar with waiting for an unsuspecting deer, but the anticipation of the newest products is no less exciting.

Happy reading, and happy hunting! 

—Bethany Miller Harbison

**"WAITING, FOR  
THE HUNTER, IS  
NOT BORING...**

**THERE'S A  
CERTAIN THRILL  
IN THE  
ANTICIPATION."**



Chuck Ward



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# POINTS of INTEREST

THE LATEST GOINGS-ON  
IN THE KNIFE WORLD

## Name the Maker

SCORE A CHANCE TO WIN A SUBSCRIPTION BY  
CORRECTLY IDENTIFYING THE MAKER OF THIS BLADE

PHOTO BY JIM COOPER



We congratulate *Knives Illustrated* reader Jason Schulze, who correctly identified Kevin Casey as the maker of the knife featured in our March/April issue.

### HOW TO WIN

If you correctly identify the maker of the featured knife, you will be entered into a drawing for a free one-year subscription to *Knives Illustrated*. If you're already a subscriber, you may choose to extend your current subscription or receive a subscription to one of our sister magazines, *Gun World* or *Bow & Arrow Hunting*.

All entries must be received by 4 p.m. PST on July 9.

Winners are determined by placing entries in numerical order and generating a random number using [www.random.org](http://www.random.org).

Please submit guesses to [djeffrey@engagedmediainc.com](mailto:djeffrey@engagedmediainc.com) and specify your preferred prize option. Please also include the mailing address where you would like to receive your subscription should you win.

**HINT:** The North Carolina-based maker of this knife specializes in knives made entirely from one piece of steel — most frequently 440C, D2 and ATS-34 — that are finished with highly intricate carvings.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Dates and locations subject to change; please contact the show managers before arranging your travel.

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#### NOV. 6-7

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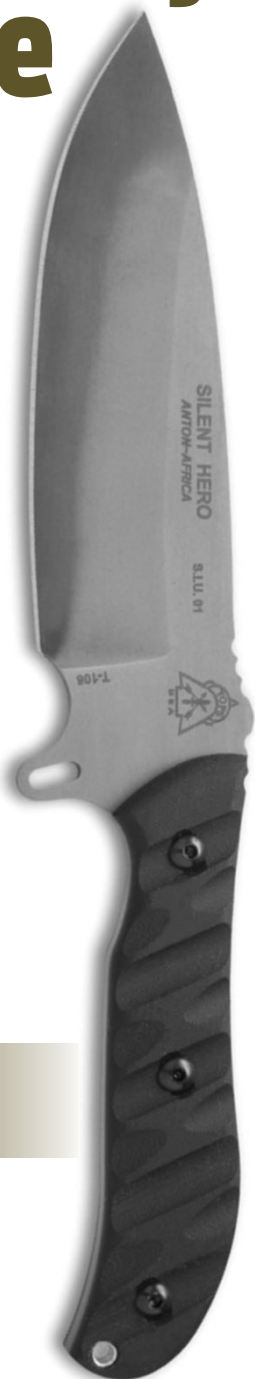
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The Silent Hero knife was designed by Anton du Plessis, a military specialist and member of the Silent Heroes advisory board, and has been widely praised by those who have purchased the knife so far.

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The Shun Premier Kiritsuke

# Now You See It

Curious about the new safety mechanism featured on a number of CRKT's 2015 models? Now you can get a look for yourself that is sure to pique your interest. Search for the CRKT OFFICIAL YouTube channel for an informative demonstration video of the innovative Ikoma Locking Safety, designed by Flavio Ikoma.

## CORRECTIONS

Knives Illustrated apologizes for two errors that were made in our March/April issue:

- On the Morakniv page of our SHOT Show coverage, the photos for the Pro C and Precision knives were switched.
- Our story on the Baryonyx Machete misspelled the company's name. Please visit [www.BaryonyxKnife.com](http://www.BaryonyxKnife.com) for more information about this excellent company. 



# PRACTICALLY PERFECT

A TACTICAL-GRADE FOLDER FOR  
THE EVERYDAY USER

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DAVE SPAULDING

**IN the tactical arena, having options is often the difference between success and failure.**

This reality is why I took a liking to knives made by Rick Hinderer, whose latest collaboration with Zero Tolerance is a sure bet for tactical users — but also for the everyday user.







## Getting Acquainted

I first met Hinderer during a course at the Tactical Defense Institute in Ohio, where he showed me several examples of his custom designs. I was immediately taken by the heft and balance of his knives in my hand, and particularly appreciated that I could use either the left or

right thumb stud or index flipper to open the blade.

The downside of Hinderer knives, however, is trying to get one! His waiting list is years long, and he gives priority to members of the military, law enforcement and emergency services. But thanks to Zero Tolerance, a number of Hinder-

**"THE 0566  
IS BUILT  
FOR PURE  
PERFORMANCE  
IN AN EDC-  
PERFECT SIZE."**



The spine jimping found on the ZT 0566 is not too sharp and offers an excellent gripping surface for those who, like the author, prefer a sabre grip.



The carbon fiber grip panel is light in weight but tough in performance. It offers just enough "grip sticky" to hold on to without abrading the hand.



The Hinderer-designed index finger flipper offers both opening options as well as protection from sliding on to the blade.



The black pocket clip is fully reversible for tip up, tip down or right/left hand carry.



The stainless steel liner lock is the author's preferred method of locking the blade open. The ZT version is both solid and positive.



er's designs are now accessible to users without the way and at much more affordable costs.

I was introduced to the ZT 0566 — a 3.25-inch folder with the balance, feel and utility of a Hinderer custom — at the 2015 SHOT Show and was impressed immediately.

### Down to Details

More compact than its larger brothers (the 0560 and 0561) the 0566 is built for pure performance in an EDC-perfect size, as the size limit in many jurisdictions is under 3.5 inches. Do you keep track of the knife laws in all of the locations you travel? Many folks don't, so the idea of carrying a knife that is legal most places can be reassuring. Like all knives in the ZT lineup, the 0566's construction is second to none, using only high-quality components. The blade is pure ELMAX powdered steel. With few impurities in the steel, the blade can be sharpened to razor quality while retaining an excellent edge, blade strength, and toughness.

I took the blade through my usual favorite cutting tests, which included working through sections of seatbelt nylon as well as cardboard and other commonly found materials with nary a problem. One test I like to perform on a new knife is to suspend a piece of typing paper and stab it to see if the blade cuts or pushes the paper out of the way. Wharncliffe blades are famous for "grabbing" and cutting paper in this fashion while other blade styles are not. The 0566 sliced through the suspended paper like it wasn't there, telling me it was plenty sharp.

After testing the 0566, I discovered the ELMAX blade held its edge quite well and has continued to hold a good edge as I



The reason the author prefers the frame lock is the gripping hand will actually help hold the locking device in place while the knife is being used.

have continued to carry and use the knife for several months.

### Getting a Grip

For a secure but light grip, the front scale on my test model was textured carbon fiber, though checkered G10 is also available. Carbon fiber is a light, but very tough, material that is being used in many applications where light, tough and cost

### SPECIFICATIONS

**STEEL:** ELMAX, stonewashed finish  
**HANDLE:** Textured G10 front, stainless steel back  
**BLADE LENGTH:** 3.25 inches  
**OVERALL LENGTH:** 7.70 inches  
**WEIGHT:** 5.3 ounces  
**OPENING:** SpeedSafe mechanism  
**LOCK:** Frame lock, lockbar stabilizer  
**CARRY:** Quad-mount, deep-carry clip  
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## "THE CLASSIC HINDERER-DESIGNED FLIPPER TAB KEEPS YOUR HAND FROM SLIDING ONTO THE BLADE."

effective are essential characteristics. The back of the handle is all stainless steel with a sturdy frame lock and lockbar stabilizer. I have come to prefer the frame-lock design, as I feel it is the least likely design to fail under hard use. Why? Because the hand gripping actually helps keep it engaged.

The 0566 also offers Zero Tolerance's quad-mounting system so end users can choose tip-up/tip-down, left- or right-hand carry. And because it's a deep-carry clip, the knife will sit comfortably deep in the pocket to help keep it in a low profile.

The shape of the 0566's grip is the same as the larger 0560 and is obvi-

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Compact size for highly adaptable everyday use
- ELMAX steel is easily sharpened to razor quality
- Sturdy, beefy handle
- Customizable carry options



The Zero Tolerance 0566 shown with the Hinderer XM-3Wharncliffe folder...the design lineage is quite obvious.



The ZT 0566 frame lock shown side by side with the custom Hinderer folder. ZT did not cut corners when it built this same feature into its production knives.

## THE HINDERER XM-3 WHARNCLIFFE

The three-inch XM Wharncliffe was a direct result of a conversation between the author and Rick Hinderer while attending a tactical firearms course.

One of my personal favorite Hinderer designs is the XM Series CNC flat-ground Wharncliffe, whose blade offers maximum cutting potential over a wide variety of surfaces.

The oversized choil permits choking up on the blade for more precise work while the blade locks up on a solid 1/4-inch in diameter thumb stud, which is press fitted into the blade. This makes for a very strong lockup as there is no loosening of the thumb stud which can happen with two piece designs. The fact that the thumb stud locks up against the frame adds an incredible amount of strength to the sideways torque of the blade as the sideways stresses are being stopped by the whole handle side, thus relieving the stress that would normally be put on the pivot.

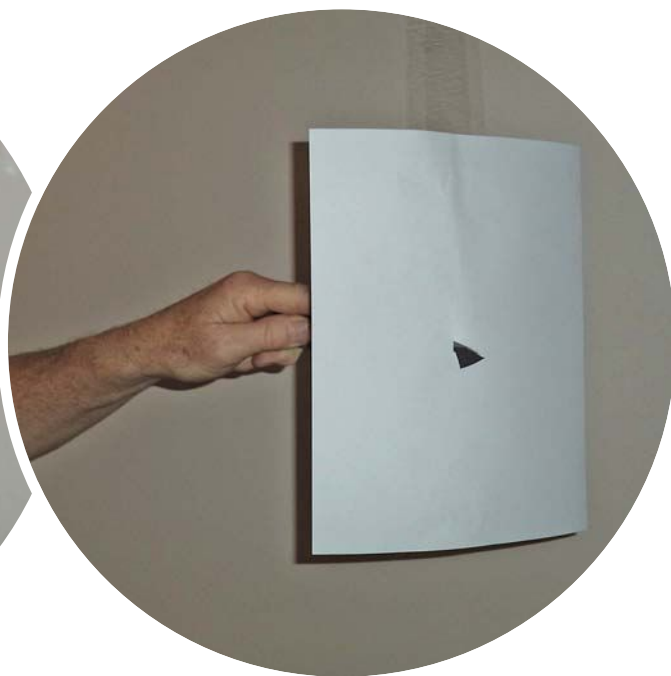
The pivot itself is made from 17-4PH stainless steel on a new state of the art CNC turning center, guaranteeing precise accuracy. The pivot is a 1/4-inch in diameter with a 3/8-inch head. The pivot is drilled and tapped completely through and is mated with an in-house-designed screw, making for an incredibly strong pivot that is easy to adjust.

The XM folder handle shape is designed to be very ergonomic and comfortable in a wide variety of user positions. The textured pattern used on the grip scale does not "bite" the hand during use but still offers a solid grip surface. The 3-D texture is designed to direct liquids (sweat, oils, blood, etc.) away from the skin and into the valleys of the texture.

The lock side of the knife is precision CNC-manufactured from 6AL4V titanium featuring the patented Hinderer lockbar stabilizer, and the knife can be set up for either tip up or tip down carry. The non-lock side has a .05-inch titanium liner with a G-10 handle scale. This high-strength material combines with the full titanium liner to add strength and rigidity.

The handle scales can be easily changed by the end user if another color is desired. The standard finish on all XM folders is a highly durable tumbled/stonewash that will stand up to hard use in all environments. The Wharncliffe blade is both sharp and strong and while I would not use the tip to pry with, I have been very impressed with its strength.





One of the author's favorite tests for a blade's sharpness is quite simple and easy to reproduce. Simply suspend a common piece of typing paper and slowly stab at it to see if it will cut or push. The ZT 0566 is a cutter!

ously Hinderer-influenced, as it feels very good in the hand. The layers of carbon fiber, the full stainless steel liner, the frame lock and all components are layered nicely. The pieces are cut clean and crisp and the edges of the handle are nicely rounded and comfortable to hold. This results in a relatively thick and comfortable handle that you can hang on to when the hand is wet, cold, gloved or in less than optimal conditions.

## FAST FACTS

### THREE THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT RICK HINDERER...

- 1 He is an active-duty firefighter and paramedic.
- 2 He has graduated from multiple top-rated firearms training schools and frequently studies with top defensive knife training instructors.
- 3 He keeps in touch with those who buy his knives and uses their feedback to make modifications to his designs.



Zero Tolerance has zero tolerance for mediocrity, and it shows in the quality of their production knives. With an MSRP of \$180, the ZT 0566 is a lot of blade for the money.



The deep carry clip position designed into the 0566 combines nicely with the black coating of the clip to offer a very low profile pocket carry solution.

The spine jimping is well executed and not overly sharp, which is a real asset for those who prefer (like me) a sabre grip. The classic Hinderer-designed flipper tab keeps your hand from sliding onto the blade in either a forward or reverse grip, something I really appreciate.

The 0566 has an overall length of 7.7 inches and weighs 5.3 ounces, making it quite a bit smaller than the 0560 while only weighing 0.7 ounces less. While some may think of the 0566 as being too heavy, others will find the weight comforting. The weight is likely due to the stainless steel frame lock and full steel liner, which I feel makes the knife a higher-quality product.

### Optimum Options

The previously mentioned four-position, black-coated, pocket clip (an appropriate feature on any EDC knife) allows the user to carry right- or left-handed, tip up or tip down. There's plenty of dispute over which carry configuration is the best, but Hinderer's design allows each user to choose what best suits them.

Deploying any style of tactical-grade knife is important, and the folder certainly is more difficult than a fixed blade. The 0566 comes with an assisted opening feature designed by Ken Onion called the SpeedSafe mechanism; all you need to do to get the knife blade open is give it a push (thumb) or pull (index finger) and the mechanism will do the rest. The lock-up on the 0566 was solid and without play in any direction.

**"THE BLADE CAN BE SHARPENED TO RAZOR QUALITY WHILE RETAINING AN EXCELLENT EDGE, BLADE STRENGTH, AND TOUGHNESS."**

### Final Thoughts

The 0566 is a darn good cutting tool. Its adaptability makes it an excellent choice for EDC, law enforcement or military applications. It's a small knife with a big knife feel that should be carry legal in

most places across America. Druthers? I'd like to eventually see a partially serrated blade in a model slightly smaller, something along the size of my Hinderer Wharncliffe, but until then the 0566 will do excellent work for me as is. **KI**

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# EVOLUTION IN PRECISION

TEXT AND PHOTOS  
BY JIM ANKERSON

**THE SEBENZA 25 IS A HARD WORKING, HIGHLY REFINED TOOL THAT WANTS LOTS OF WORK**

**SOME opportunities are too good to be true. One of those entails testing 25 years of evolution.**

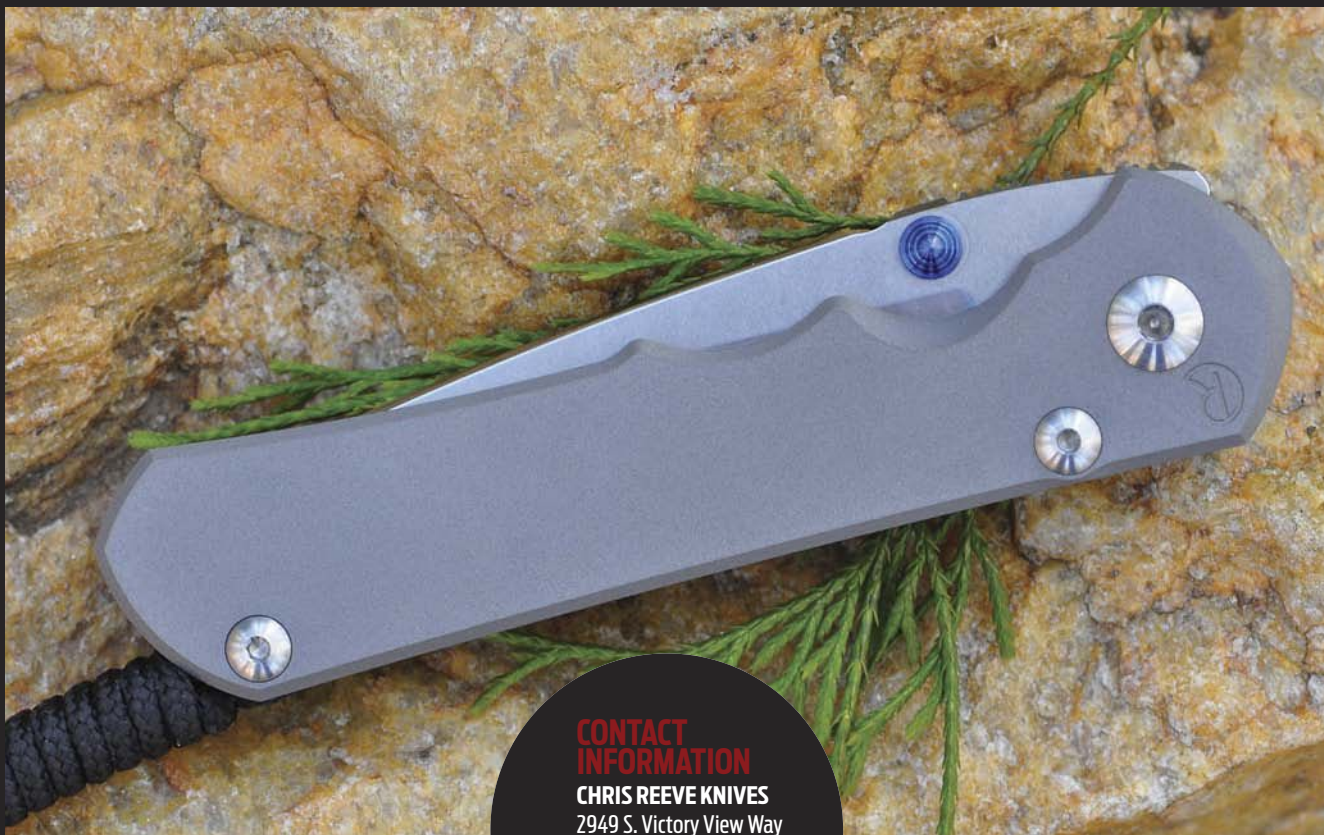
In the following story, I had the chance to test the Chris Reeve Sebenza 25, the latest version of the legendary Sebenza. I put the hard working, high precision tool through the paces to see what it can really do. Following is what I discovered.

## THE BACKGROUND

Introduced in 1991, the original Sebenza has undergone a number of changes, all of which were designed to refine the design. This is not unusual for Chris Reeve, who is always striving to improve and make the best knives possible.

The small Sebenza was introduced in 1992, the Regular Profile Sebenza in 1996 and the Classic in 2000. Since then, there have been minor improvements that evolved into the new Sebenza 25, which was introduced at the 2012 Blade Show.





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The new Sebenza 25 was introduced at the 2012 Blade Show.

**“THE ICONIC SEBENZA HAS GONE THROUGH A NUMBER OF ITERATIONS IN ITS PATH TO BECOME THE STANDARD AGAINST WHICH OTHER KNIVES ARE MEASURED.”**

— ANNE REEVE

### MAJOR DESIGN CHANGES

The large hollow grind was introduced to provide a balance between the traditional hollow grind of the Sebenza 21 and a full flat grind. This gives the cutting efficiency of a full hollow ground blade while providing the added strength of a flat ground blade. This also prolongs and maintains the geometry for a longer period of time, as the blade wears from repeated sharpening.

The ceramic ball added to the RIL was originally introduced in the Umnumzaan in 2008; it provides a smoother action between the blade and the lock face while reducing wear because the ceramic is much harder than both the blade steel and the titanium.

The bushing system is gone. The Sebenza 25 uses the same type of pivot system that the Umnumzaan does, which is very large and has a strong pivot.

Finger grooves provide improved ergonomics and a different overall feel and improved grip. Thicker blade stock adds strength so the knife could be used for more stressful tasks. It also has standard dual thumb studs for easy opening right- or left-handed.

### TESTING NOTES

The knife was reprofiled and sharpened to 15 degrees preside using an Edge Pro Apex with a 320-grit silicon carbide stone then finished to





## SPECIFICATIONS

**BLADE MATERIAL:** CPM S35VN Stainless Steel

**BLADE HARDNESS:** 58-59 RC

**BLADE LENGTH:** Large - 3.625" (92 mm)

**BLADE THICKNESS:** 0.14" (3.56 mm)

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 8.335" (212 mm)

**HANDLE LENGTH:** 4.8" (122 mm)

**HANDLE MATERIAL:** 6Al4V Titanium

**HANDLE THICKNESS:** 0.150" (3.8 mm)

**WEIGHT:** 5.2 oz. (145 g)

**FITTINGS:** 303 Stainless Steel

**DOUBLE THUMBLUGS:** 6Al4V Titanium

**POCKET CLIP:** 6Al4V Titanium

400 grit. The original edge was good at 18 to 20 degrees per side, but I reprofile all the test knives to 15 degrees per side before testing. I do this to maintain consistency in my testing procedure.

The NIB edge would be fine for use right out of the box, as it was very sharp and well done. During the testing, I cut 5/8-inch manila rope, cardboard, wood, power cord and even some heavy-duty zip ties.

I resharpened the knife between the rope and the cardboard stages; the edge wasn't touched until the end of the testing.

## MANILA ROPE

I cut the rope on a scale calibrated to the wood that was used to cut on. Using a draw cut (slicing), I cut the rope completely through in one pass; that counted as one cut. I made three to four test cuts to get the starting pressure,

## QUICK TIPS

- Wipe down and keep the blade dry
- Quick touch-ups are easier than waiting until the knife is dull and will extend the life of the blade
- Keep the knife clean using the provided Microfiber towel

and then I continued the test, stopping every 20 cuts to check the down force. I did this until 20 pounds of down force was met and then I stopped the test.

Many consider manila rope cutting to be the standard to test edge retention; it's not easy to cut, it is abrasive and, depending on the method, can be a good guide to how well the knife will hold an edge.

The Sebenza 25 started at 10 pounds of down force and made 320 cuts until it reached 20 pounds. That is very good in comparison to other knives tested. There wasn't any noticeable edge damage, and it would slice printer paper easily after this stage, so it had a usable edge. A few passes on a ceramic rod, and it was back to slicing phone book paper and hair shaving sharp.

## CARDBOARD

I resharpened the edge before this stage. I cut the cardboard in straight lines because this is a measured test to see how much cardboard I could cut, and I tested for sharpness every 100 feet after cutting the phone book paper.



The author put the knife through rigorous testing, and it passed with flying colors.



The steel performed well and held an edge through the testing.

## CRUCIBLE CPM S35VN STAINLESS STEEL ALLOY CONTENT

**CARBON:** 1.40%

**CHROMIUM:** 14.00%

**VANADIUM:** 3.00%

**MOLYBDENUM:** 2.00%

**NIوبيUM:** 0.50%



The author cut more than 2,000 linear feet of cardboard.

Cardboard isn't very consistent and can have a lot of garbage in it, such as metal flakes, pieces of paper, clay and other impurities. It is a general abrasive and a lot of people cut cardboard of various types in normal everyday use.

I cut 2,200 linear feet of cardboard, and the edge was still slicing phone book paper easily and still had good bite at that point. There wasn't any noticeable edge damage at this stage so I moved on to the next stage.

## WOOD CUTTING

I used 1x1 pine to test the strength of the edge. I made thin and thick slices through the wood then snapped the edge out sideways to stress the edge. Next, I pushed the blade through the wood, splitting it in half, and then in half again using only my hand. This shows the knife can be used in a field environment to make fuzzy sticks for making a fire ... without doing any damage to the knife. And that's after cutting 2,200 feet of cardboard so we are showing real world use here.

There wasn't any noticeable edge damage or dulling in this stage, and the Sebenza 25 still sliced phone book paper after the wood cutting.

## POWER CORD

I used 5/16-inch orange power cord to show how well the Sebenza 25 can hold up to that type of use. I put the power cord on a block of wood and cut through it 45 times using a straight down push cut. The Sebenza 25 made the cuts easy, zipping right through it with little effort.

The edge held up well with one slight shiny spot, which was hardly even noticeable, and didn't affect the sharpness, as it still sliced phone book paper after this stage. At this point, I had not sharpened the edge since the cardboard.

## ZIP TIES

To really push the edge to the maximum, I used 175-pound, heavy-duty zip ties. These are very hard and very thick so they are extremely hard to cut. It took so much pressure to cut through it the edge would stick in the wood cross grain after it went through the zip tie. I had to put my palm on top of the spine of the blade while putting most of my weight into each and every cut.

After making 23 cuts through the zip tie, the edge finally lost enough sharpness that it wouldn't slice phone book paper. I checked the edge and it lost most of the bite, although it would still slice printer paper easily, so I still had a useable, serviceable edge even at this point.

There was some definite edge wear and tear as would be expected as the zip ties did have a noticeable effect on the sharpness.

## TOUCHING UP THE EDGE

I wanted to see what it would take to touch up the edge after cutting all these items. Notice I said touch up—not sharpen—and this means a quick touch up to bring the edge back.

I made three passes on each side on a 1000-grit ceramic rod, and the Sebenza was back to slicing phone book paper.



Your purchase includes all these items.

That was very easy and fast so taking it farther I went ahead and made three passes on a silicon carbide loaded strop then two more passes on the ceramic rod. That took maybe a minute, and it was shaving hair at that point.

That is really good and shows how easy CPM S35VN is to deal with and touch up ... and that's using simple sharpening tools on the fly.

## GOOD VIBES

I am familiar with Chris Reeve knives, so I knew what to expect out of the box, and it was a new box, bigger than the old style boxes, more secure. It came with three Allen wrenches (to take apart the knife), Chris Reeve fluorinated grease, thread locker for the pivot and their wonderful microfiber towel.



Fit and finish was excellent. I couldn't find anything wrong, and I did look. What I saw was what typical Chris Reeve quality; that's the highest possible in every way. Nice and smooth right out of the box with bank vault lockup, centered blade.

Ergonomics is very good. It fit my hand well so the Sebenza 25 was very comfortable for me to use while testing, and that's with and without gloves on.

It has one of the most comfortable titanium frame locks I have ever handled, and I think that says a lot for Chris Reeve and his attention to detail. The handle wasn't slippery to me at all—with its bead blast finish—and has a nice feel that isn't too grabby.

The steel, CPM S35VN, performed very well, held an edge through the testing process and didn't develop any issues such as chipping or rolling. This is nothing more than normal edge wear and tear.

One thing that did surprise me was that the blade still looked new after all the testing. There was not a scratch on it or any noticeable wear. The stone washed



finish really held up great to all that testing, and that is noteworthy, as this knife is meant to be used.


Lockup remained solid throughout the testing process. There was zero play in any direction and no notable lock bar movement. The smoothness remained through the whole process even with all of the gunk that got into the knife from the testing and sharpening.

Afterward, I took the knife apart and cleaned it up. As expected, it has tight tolerances, the highest in the knife industry, so it didn't just fall apart when I took out the screws. I greased the pivot and around the washers and put it back to-

gether adding the thread locker to the pivot screw. The Sebenza 25 went right back together, and the blade was centered with no real adjustment at all. I set the pivot tension to how I wanted it, and the blade was perfectly centered.

I have been carrying it and using since I finished the testing; the knife carries well in pocket, and the clip really holds the knife well. Not too low or too high in pocket and that makes it easy to grab and get out. Tip up carry puts the blade up against the back of the pocket. Blade retention is excellent so there's no need to worry about the blade opening when not wanted.

At \$455, this isn't exactly an inexpensive knife. What you get for that money, however, is the highest tolerances in the knife industry, excellent fit and finish, 25 years of refinement and an excellent warranty.

The Sebenza 25 is a hard working, highly refined tool that is meant to be used. For those who don't know, Sebenza means Work in Zulu. It's legendary. 

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# TWO FOR THE WILDERNESS

BENCHMADE'S NEW SERIES IS A HUNTER'S BEST FRIEND

STORY AND PHOTOS BY TERRILL HOFFMAN

**SPRING** is starting to peep out all over the Southeast as the temperatures rise and the days turn longer. While the weather change may prompt the Tom turkeys to gobble in efforts to attract hens, there is little solace for the avid deer hunter. Opening day is months away and all he can do is to dream about adventures to come and ready his gear for the next year. Rifles will be carried to range to test loads, new scopes will be mounted and sighted-in, and stand locations will be scouted.

This is also the time of year a wise hunter will start testing other new gear such as hunting knives. It takes time to become accustomed to a new knife and right in the middle of skinning a deer on a cold and wet October hunt is not the time to learn the limitations of a new blade!

**"THE OVERALL APPEARANCE OF BOTH KNIVES SHOWS BENCHMADE'S EXTENSIVE EFFORTS TO PROVIDE EXCELLENT ERGONOMICS AND THE PROPER BLENDING OF MATERIALS."**







The Steep Country (top)  
and Grizzly Creek from  
Benchmade's Hunt series.



## SIDE BY SIDE

### Steep Country

Fixed blade  
7.5 inches overall  
Santoprene handle  
Includes Kydex sheath

### Grizzly Creek

Folder with AXIS mechanism  
7.75 inches overall  
Dymondwood handle  
Includes pocket clip and gut hook

For well over the past 15 years, I have taken new knives to the field as I tested them for various publications, with mixed results. Some proved to be worthy of a review and some were returned to the manufacturer with little or no coverage. Either way, I have learned that the longer I was able to test a knife prior to the hunting season, the more comfortable I was in its use.

One knife I tested a season or two back was the Hidden Canyon Hunter from the Benchmade Hunt Series. This knife performed rather well and is very close to the size and pattern of my personal hunting knife, a custom model made for me by D. Arvel over 25 years ago. It was the performance of the Hidden Canyon Hunter that convinced me to take the assignment to cover two additional Benchmade knives from the Hunt Series—and this time I would be able to fondle and test the knives prior to hunting season.

### The Models' Specs

I recently received the Steep Country and the Grizzly Creek from Benchmade and even though one is a fixed blade and the other is a folder, they are similar in overall size and pattern. The Steep Country fixed blade knife has a 3.5-inch drop-point blade of CPM-S30V. The flat-ground blade has a thickness a hair under 5/32 inches and a width of 1 5/32 inches at its widest point. The blade steel continues to provide a full tang that is the foundation of a Santoprene handle, available in black or hi-viz orange, molded around the tang. The spine of the tang has a series of 1/4-inch grooves spaced 5/16 inches apart and the top of these grooves are allowed to project from the Santoprene to improve the gripping properties of the handle. The bottom of the tang is completely hidden but the Santoprene has ribs molded in to further improve the grip.

The upper rear portion of the tang is exposed to reveal a lanyard hole. A thumb groove is molded into front of the handle on both sides and the top of the spine is

**"THE BLADE OPENS AND LOCKS WITH BENCHMADE'S AXIS LOCK SYSTEM, WHICH I FOUND ESPECIALLY DESIRABLE AS IT IS AMBIDEXTROUS."**



The Dymondwood may look more traditional, but the orange will not be easily misplaced. Both handles are comfortable and durable.



The Grizzly Creek's blade has a bit more of a drop and a slight recurve, while the Steep Country's is a bit wider. These differences have little effect on the knives' performance.



The Grizzly Creek model features a gut hook that folds out from the base.





Next to your rifle, there is  
no more important tool  
than your hunting knife.



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Synthetic handles are especially durable
- S30V blade steel requires minimal sharpening
- Excellent ergonomics allow comfortable, extensive use

grooved just forward of the handle for an additional thumb purchase. A matching series of grooves are ground into the spine near the tip to locate a purchase point for your index finger when you choke up on the knife for detail work. The overall length is only 7 1/2 inches, which in conjunction with the molded handle provides a very lightweight knife. A black Kydex sheath with a leather keeper and belt loop is provided with the knife.

The Grizzly Creek is a folder that also has a 3 1/2-inch drop-point blade, but it is only 1 inch wide and 1/8 inch thick. The belly of the flat-ground blade on the Grizzly Creek has the slightest re-curve and maintains the grooves along the spine both in front of the handle and near the tip, similar to the Steep Country. For one-

## CONTACT

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These two knives came in handy around the campsite for tasks such as sharpening tent stakes.







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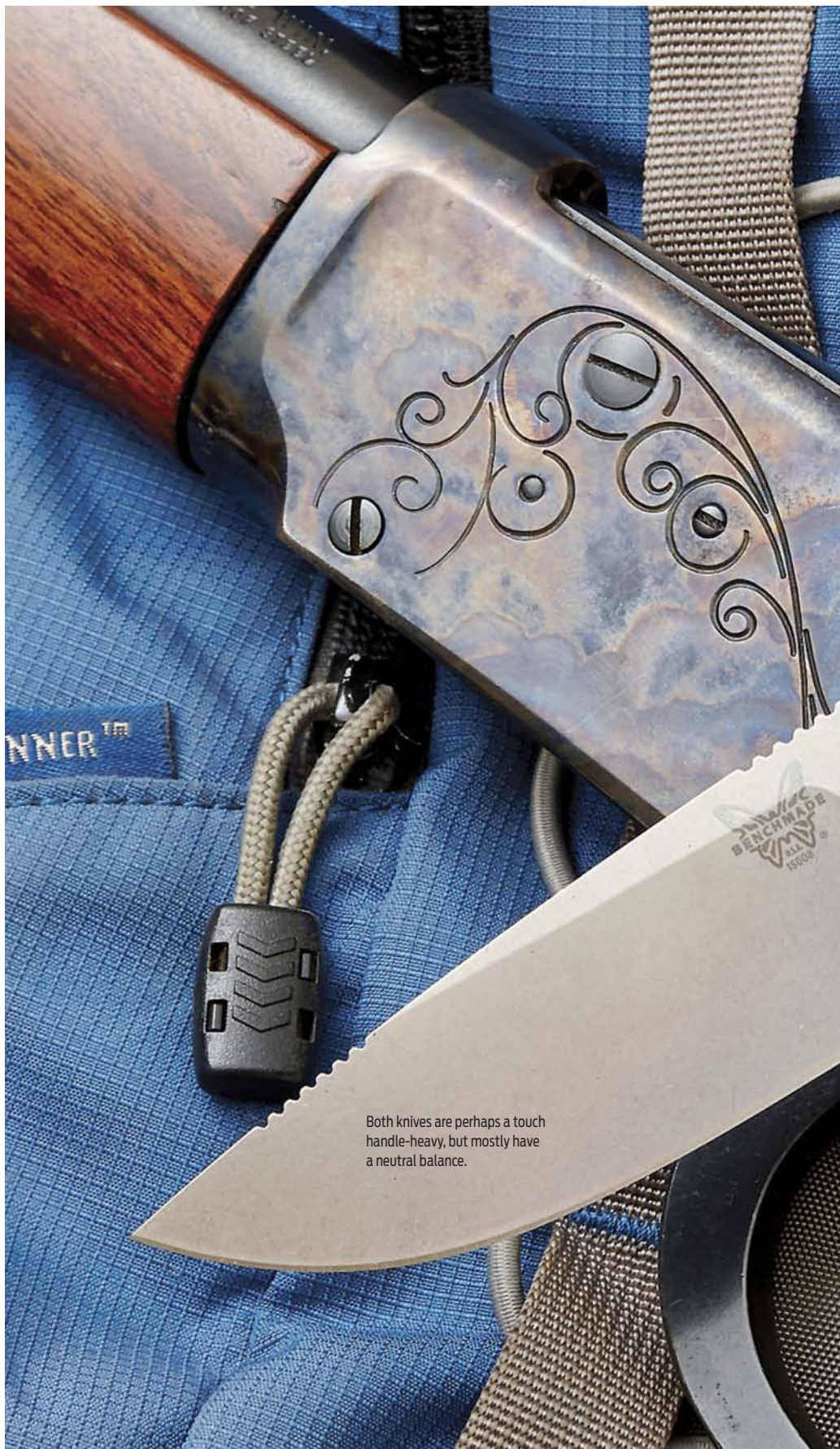


handed opening, thumb studs are provided on both sides of the blade. The liners are stainless steel and the handle scales are Dymondwood. Dymondwood is a birch powder composite impregnated with resin, and while it has the look of natural wood it provides a much stronger handle material. Overall length of the folder is 7 ¾ inches, which is slightly longer than the fixed blade model.

Benchmade chose to use their AXIS lock system on the Grizzly Creek and I have always found this system desirable since it is ambidextrous. (Being left-handed, this has always been a point of contention for me when dealing with folding knives.) While the spine is open for over half of the handle, there is a filler block towards the back that also has the ¼ inch grooves, as found on the Steep Country. Two additional features can be found on the Grizzly Creek folder. A pocket clip is positioned for a tip-up carry, and a gut hook pivots out from the lower back of the handle.

In general, handling is my one problem with the knife. I am not fond of a gut hook and this feature prevents the pocket clip from being mounted on the opposite side of the handle. Benchmade had a truly ambidextrous knife until they limited the pocket clip mounting. Being a militant lefty, "almost" ambidextrous just doesn't work for me and I have never snagged the viscera while gutting an animal. In fact, one of the strong

**"THE S30V STEEL HELD UP BEAUTIFULLY WITH JUST A FEW OCCASIONAL TOUCH-UP SWIPES ON A SHARPENER."**



Both knives are perhaps a touch handle-heavy, but mostly have a neutral balance.







points of the drop-point blade pattern is that it helps to keep the point away from the internal organs during field dressing a game animal. Rant over.

### Performance Testing

Overall appearance of these knives shows extensive efforts by Benchmade to supply improved ergonomics and the proper blending of materials. However, each knife is so well fitted that various features go almost unnoticed until you have a chance to actually handle them. Sitting on my desk I could only imagine how they would perform, but before I took them to the field I wanted to experiment a bit around the house.

Wood scales have always seemed to have a “warmer” feel to them over manmade handle materials, but the Santoprene has both a warm and a soft feel. My first question is how these two handles would hold up to the temperature changes one might expect between a coyote hunt in August and a deer hunt in November. The solution was simple; I place both knives in the freezer overnight and then set them on an oven pan in direct sunlight on my deck for the day.

This is not rocket science. Coming out of the freezer they were cold; very cold! After spending the day on the deck they were too hot to handle comfortably but the handle materials showed no ill effects, and once they returned to an ambient temperature you would

never have guessed they had been subjected to either situation.

It was then that I tried the knives in the kitchen—cutting, slicing, and de-boning a venison roast from last year’s deer season. The thin blades excelled in this use, but I do need to note that as one would expect, it was harder to clean the folder after using it on the meat. As steak knives they couldn’t be beat.

Of course, around the house the average person has the choice of a dozen knives but once you are in the field your selection is diminished substantially. A good hunting knife has to play the role of utility blade as well as a kitchen knife when you are in a deer camp. Fortunately the timing of this year’s Practice What You Preach (PWYP) was perfect for my purposes.

PWYP is a yearly camping trip held on my property with about 75-100 campers from around the country converging for four days to practice woodcraft. Several of us tried the two knives during PWYP on just about every chore one could imagine as being associated with the outdoors. Although a few participants stated they would prefer a larger blade and a few wanted a smaller blade, these knives filled all roles without any problems.

The S30V steel lived up to its reputation. Even after being passed around from one camper to the next, neither knife really needed to be sharpened. We did



The Steep Country comes with a combination Kydex/leather sheath, while the Grizzly Creek can find a home in your pocket. Both are so lightweight that you'll hardly know they're there until you need them





Benchmade's AXIS lock is perfect for the right- and left-handed alike.

Well-executed grooves just in front of the handles allow a better grip when you need to use extra force.

give the edge a few swipes on a set of crop sticks, but I have always found that with S30V if you touch up the edge before it really goes dull, it is easier to maintain with less work. Carving tent stakes and making slingshots as well as clearing brush may not seem to be heavy work but with the right tool, nothing is too difficult.

The best report I can give is that at the end of the gathering I had a hard time getting these knives back from a few campers.

### The Final Word

If I had to choose between the two knives, I would buy them both. They were equals in every use. The only thing we did not do was skin an animal, but after using these knives on just about every other chore I doubt there would be any difficulty. The smart move would be to keep the folder in your pocket and the fixed blade on your belt. Benchmade did their job and now is the time for you to do yours. Shop now for your new hunting knife and learn to use it before the season even starts. **KI**


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The Victorinox small field dressing kit from left to right: 6-inch boning knife, 8-inch fillet knife, 6-inch skinner (curved), Victorinox Hunter Pro (not included in set) and hand-held sharpener.





# AFTER THE HUNT

VICTORINOX'S DRESSING KIT IS  
AN ESSENTIAL FOR  
DO-IT-YOURSELFERS

STORY AND PHOTOS  
BY ABE ELIAS

**THE** hunter's job  
doesn't end when he  
bags his game; instead  
that's when the real  
work begins.

To bring your prize home, you must first field dress the animal, and many of us also like to do the work of butchering ourselves. For both of these tasks, the Victorinox Small Field Dressing Kit (SFDK) provides just the right tools.





My buddy Shane makes the primal cuts on a pig.

### First Look

As someone who loves having a kit, one compact roll that contains everything I need in the field is ideal. The SFDK works best for smaller game (though Victorinox does also offer a larger counterpart), containing a curved 6-inch skinning knife, a flexible 6-inch boning knife, 8-inch fillet knife and handheld sharpener.

The larger kit leaves out the curved skinner, includes a par-

ing knife, 10-inch cimeter and 8-inch breaking knife, and trades the sharpener for a steel. Both kits are contained in a nylon carrying roll for easy, convenient transportation.

All the knives come from Victorinox's commercial-grade series and a handle material dubbed Fibrox — a type of fiber with subtle texturing and contours that make for comfortable use over an extended period.



The Fibrox handles have fine texturing and subtle contours. Notice the tapered bolster area, which makes it easier to form a pinch grip.





The exaggerated curve of the skinner (right) makes slashing and draw style cuts easier, whereas the boning knife allows for straight-tip control and ease of slicing.

## TECHNIQUE FOR THE TOOLS

Butchering and field dressing employ a number of holds that your handle will need to accommodate. Here are the three most common.

### 1. BUTCHER'S GRIP

Position: Reversed power grip with the edge facing inward, so the knife blade comes out the bottom of your grip and the edge faces towards your body.

Best for: Giving the user a lot of power on cuts and heavily utilizing the tip of the blade.

### 2. CHEF'S GRIP

Position: Hold the knife in a power grip, basically in your fist with the blade pointing up out of your grip. Then place your index finger on the spine of the knife.

Best for: Controlling the tip and making draw cuts (pulling the blade back towards yourself to slice through the material).

### 3. REVERSE GRIP

Position: The same as a butcher's grip, except the edge is facing away from you.

Best for: When it is quicker than moving the piece around.



After cutting the ribs with the saw, I used the 6-inch boning knife in a butcher's grip to separate the belly from the loin.



## CONTACT

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A thin, flat-ground blade makes easy work when you need to make slicing cuts, such as for bacon.



A flexible blade makes it easy to keep the blade near the bones as you make your cuts.



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- Versatile designs for every field dressing or butchering task
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The inside panel of the case has pockets and slots for organization.

### In Action

To test the SFDK, I butchered half of a pig I'd had stored in my freezer, and it was no match for these high performers.

The two workhorses of the group were the boning knife and the fillet knife. When butchering, you want a knife with a good flexible tip, which is much easier to maneuver between and around the bones. The blades were thin, flat ground and polished, so they slipped right through the meat. I was not disappointed with a single one of them.

What I did find a bit of a letdown was the handheld sharpener. It worked best when rested upon a surface, which meant I had to stop what I was doing and find a solid place to set it down to use it. Effi-

**"THE TWO WORKHORSES OF THE GROUP WERE THE BONING KNIFE AND THE FILLET KNIFE."**

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To get a really good pass with the hand held sharpener, I found it easier to rest the knife edge-up on a surface.



The results of our handiwork: a good-looking pile of bacon.



A thin, flexible blade is easy to maneuver around bones. I am using the boning knife to cut inch-thick chops.



**"THE BLADES WERE THIN, FLAT GROUND AND POLISHED, SO THEY SLIPPED RIGHT THROUGH THE MEAT."**

ciency and convenience are important in the field, and in these areas a steel would be preferable.

While the case was not designed to hang for access to the knives as you work, it is very convenient for transporting and storing your blades.

Overall, this cutlery is top notch, and it's great to have a kit for transporting all the knives you need at once. I could easily see taking the knives out of the kit and using them at home on a daily basis. The Victorinox field dressing kit is a great place to start if you were looking for a kit just for hunting. Equipped with the SFDK, there are few challenges you won't be able to handle. **(KI)**



A young chef's apprentice found the knives' handles just as comfortable in her smaller hands as they were in mine.

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## JANTZ USA MADE BLADES

**Jantz** Blades are the highest quality pre-shaped blades available anywhere.  
Each of these hollow ground blades are designed by our team and crafted 100% on site at our facility.

### Oyster Blade



The back is flat.

Designed with beauty and usability in mind, the rounded end and ground tip is perfect for shucking oysters practically and safely. Cryogenically treated and razor sharp. Overall length 6 3/4", blade is 2 1/4" x 1.04" wide, .100" thick. Handle Holes 3/16".

CAT.#	STEEL	FINISH	TEMPER	HRC	PRICE
J1008	440C	Satin	Cryo	57-58	29.95
J1089	Damascus	Etched	Cryo	58-60	49.95

### Pattern 35



Overall length 6 5/8", blade is 3" x 3/4" wide, 1/8" thick. Handle Holes 3/16", Thong Hole 3/16".

CAT.#	STEEL	FINISH	TEMPER	HRC	PRICE
J3508	440C	Satin	Cryo	57-58	32.95
J3528	D2	Satin	Cryo	59-61	32.95
J3558	CPM 154	Satin	Cryo	59-60	39.95
J3589	Damascus	Etched	Cryo	58-60	49.95

### Large Caper



Overall length 7 3/4", blade is 3" x 3/4" wide, 1/8" thick. Handle Holes 1/8".

CAT.#	STEEL	FINISH	TEMPER	HRC	PRICE
J8258	CPM 154	Satin	Cryo	59-60	34.95
J8289	Damascus	Etched	Cryo	58-60	59.95

### Small Caper



Overall length 5 1/8", blade is 2" x 1/2" wide, .100" thick. Handle Holes 1/8".

CAT.#	STEEL	FINISH	TEMPER	HRC	PRICE
J8158	CPM 154	Satin	Cryo	59-60	29.95
J8189	Damascus	Etched	Cryo	58-60	29.95

**Jantz** Blades are the highest quality pre-shaped blades available anywhere.

The two blades below are only a portion of our flat ground **Jantz** Blades. Designed and crafted 100% on site at our facility.

### Pattern 31



Pattern 31 is flat ground and has optimal edge holding capability. Overall length 7 5/8", Blade Length 3", width 1 1/8", thickness 5/32". Bolster holes 1/8", Handle Holes 1/4", Thong Hole 1/4".

CAT.#	STEEL	FINISH	TEMPER	HRC	PRICE
J3127	D2	Peened	Cryo	59-61	31.95
J3128	D2	Satin	Cryo	59-61	31.95
J3147	154CM	Peened	Cryo	58-59	35.95
J3148	154CM	Satin	Cryo	58-59	35.95
J3198	1095	Satin	Cryo	57-58	24.95
J319K	1095	Black	Cryo	57-58	24.95
J3189	Damascus	Etched	Cryo	58-60	79.95

### Pattern 65



Overall length 8 7/16", blade is 3 1/2" x 1 1/8" wide, 5/32" thick. Handle Holes 3/16", Thong Hole 3/16".

CAT.#	STEEL	FINISH	TEMPER	HRC	PRICE
J6508	440C	Satin	Cryo	57-58	39.95
J6528	D2	Satin	Cryo	59-61	39.95
J6589	Damascus	Etched	Cryo	58-60	99.95

### Pattern 51



Similar to our Pattern 31 with a full hollow grind. Cryogenically treated and razor sharp. Overall length 7 5/8", blade is 3" x 1 1/8" wide, 5/32" thick. Bolster Holes 1/8", Handle Holes 1/4", Thong Hole 1/4". See online for accessories.

CAT.#	STEEL	FINISH	TEMPER	HRC	PRICE
J5108	440C	Satin	Cryo	57-58	34.95
J5128	D2	Satin	Cryo	59-61	34.95
J5148	154CM	Satin	Cryo	58-59	39.95
J5178	CPMS 90V	Satin	Cryo	56-59	99.95
J5189	Damascus	Etched	Cryo	58-60	99.95

### Pattern 52



Similar to our Pattern 22 with a full hollow grind. Cryogenically treated and razor sharp. Overall length 8 3/8", blade is 3 1/2" x 1 3/32" wide, 5/32" thick. Bolster Holes 1/8", Handle Holes 1/4", Thong Hole 1/4". See page online for accessories.

CAT.#	STEEL	FINISH	TEMPER	HRC	PRICE
J5208	440C	Satin	Cryo	57-58	39.95
J5228	D2	Satin	Cryo	59-61	39.95
J5289	Damascus	Etched	Cryo	58-60	99.95

### Pattern 61



Pattern 61 is flat ground and has optimal edge holding capability. Overall length 7 3/4", Blade Length 3 1/4", width 1 1/4", thickness 9/64" (.140"). Bolster holes 3/32", Handle Holes 3/32" and 3/16", Thong Hole 1/4".

CAT.#	STEEL	FINISH	TEMPER	HRC	PRICE
J6127	D2	Peened	Cryo	59-61	32.95
J6128	D2	Satin	Cryo	59-61	32.95
J6107	440C	Peened	Cryo	57-58	32.95
J6108	440C	Satin	Cryo	57-58	32.95
J6157	CPM154	Peened	Cryo	59-60	44.95
J6158	CPM154	Satin	Cryo	59-60	44.95
J6189	Damascus	Etched	Cryo	58-60	89.95

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K11302	3/16"	9.95
K11402	1/4"	14.95

### Lava Flow



CAT.#	THICK	PRICE
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K11304	3/16"	9.95
K11404	1/4"	14.95

### Red Pearl



CAT.#	THICK	PRICE
K11808	1/8"	8.95
K11308	3/16"	10.95
K11408	1/4"	13.95

### Green Pearl



CAT.#	THICK	PRICE
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KI1403	1/4"	14.95

## Royal Pearl



CAT.#	THICK	PRICE
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KI1307	3/16"	9.95
KI1407	1/4"	14.95

## Black Pearl



CAT.#	THICK	PRICE
KI1806	1/8"	8.95
KI1306	3/16"	10.95
KI1406	1/4"	13.95

## Blue Pearl



CAT.#	THICK	PRICE
KI1809	1/8"	8.95
KI1309	3/16"	10.95
KI1409	1/4"	13.95

## BLADE STEEL

All steel offered below by **JANTZ** is made in the USA. Visit [www.knifemaking.com](http://www.knifemaking.com) to purchase other widths and thicknesses.

### CPM® S110V® Stainless Steel

CPM S110V is a high alloy martensitic stainless tool steel. Offers better corrosion resistance than 440C or CPM S90V. Aim hardness is 58/61. **Typical chemistry C 2.8, Nb 3.0, Cr 15.25, V 9.00, Mo 2.25, Co 2.5.**

#### 18" Steel

CAT#	THICK	WIDE	FINISH	PRICE
QF118	1/8"	1 1/2"	MILL FINISH	\$ 65.95
QF658	5/32"	2"	MILL FINISH	\$ 98.95
QF718	3/16"	1 1/2"	MILL FINISH	\$ 86.95
QF728	3/16"	2"	MILL FINISH	\$113.95

#### 36" Steel

CAT#	THICK	WIDE	FINISH	PRICE
QF136	1/8"	1 1/2"	MILL FINISH	\$129.95
QF656	5/32"	2"	MILL FINISH	\$195.95
QF716	3/16"	1 1/2"	MILL FINISH	\$171.95
QF726	3/16"	2"	MILL FINISH	\$225.95

### CPM® 20-CV Tool Steel

CPM 20CV is a martensitic stainless steel with exceptionally good wear resistance and outstanding corrosion resistance. Aim for hardness is 58-59Rc. CPM 20CV is a registered trademark of Crucible Industries LLC.

**Typical chemistry: C 1.9, Cr 20.0, V 4.0, Mo 1.0, W 6.**

#### 18" Steel

THICK	WIDE	MILL FINISH	BLANCHARD	PRECISION
1/8"	1 1/2"	TF218 - \$ 36.95	TU218 - \$ 42.95	TG218 - \$ 48.95
1/8"	2"	TF228 - \$ 44.95	TU228 - \$ 52.95	TG228 - \$ 60.95
5/32"	1 1/2"	TF318 - \$ 48.95	TU318 - \$ 54.95	TG318 - \$ 60.95
5/32"	2"	TF328 - \$ 65.95	TU328 - \$ 73.95	TG328 - \$ 81.95

#### 36" Steel

1/8"	1 1/2"	TF216 - \$ 72.95	TU216 - \$ 84.95	TG216 - \$ 96.95
1/8"	2"	TF226 - \$ 93.95	TU226 - \$109.95	TG226 - \$125.95
5/32"	1 1/2"	TF316 - \$ 90.95	TU316 - \$102.95	TG316 - \$114.95
5/32"	2"	TF326 - \$123.95	TU326 - \$139.95	TG326 - \$155.95

### CPM® REX M4 High Speed Steel

CPM REX M4 HC(HS) is a special purpose high speed steel exhibiting better wear resistance and toughness. Also providing enhanced machinability and grindability. Aim hardness is 63/65. **Typical chemistry: C 1.42, Mn .30, S .06, Cr 4.00, V 4.0, Mo 5.25, W 5.5.**

#### 18" Steel

CAT#	THICK	WIDE	FINISH	PRICE
JF428	3/16"	2"	MILL FINISH	\$ 52.95
JF518	1/4"	1 1/2"	MILL FINISH	\$ 52.95
JF528	1/4"	2"	MILL FINISH	\$ 70.95
JF548	1/4"	4"	MILL FINISH	\$134.95

#### 36" Steel

JF426	3/16"	2"	MILL FINISH	\$103.95
JF516	1/4"	1 1/2"	MILL FINISH	\$103.95
JF526	1/4"	2"	MILL FINISH	\$139.95
JF546	1/4"	4"	MILL FINISH	\$268.95

### CPM® D2 Carbon Steel

CPM D2 is an air-hardening, high carbon, high chromium tool steel, heat treatable to HRC 60-62. It offers excellent abrasion resistance. Machinable in the annealed condition and exhibits minimal distortion on hardening. **Typical chemistry: C 1.50, Mn .40, Si .40, Cr 12.00, V .95, Mo .90.**

#### 18" Steel

THICK	WIDE	MILL FINISH	BLANCHARD	PRECISION
1/8"	1 1/2"	ZF218 - \$ 26.95	ZU218 - \$ 32.95	ZG218 - \$ 38.95
1/8"	2"	ZF228 - \$ 34.95	ZU228 - \$ 42.95	ZG228 - \$ 50.95
5/32"	1 1/2"	ZF318 - \$ 28.95	ZU318 - \$ 34.95	ZG318 - \$ 40.95
5/32"	2"	ZF328 - \$ 39.95	ZU328 - \$ 47.95	ZG328 - \$ 55.95
3/16"	1 1/2"	ZF418 - \$ 35.95	ZU418 - \$ 41.95	ZG418 - \$ 47.95
3/16"	2"	ZF428 - \$ 45.95	ZU428 - \$ 53.95	ZG428 - \$ 61.95

#### 36" Steel

1/8"	1 1/2"	ZF216 - \$ 51.95	ZU216 - \$ 63.95	ZG216 - \$ 75.95
1/8"	2"	ZF226 - \$ 65.95	ZU226 - \$ 81.95	ZG226 - \$ 97.95
5/32"	1 1/2"	ZF316 - \$ 55.95	ZU316 - \$ 67.95	ZG316 - \$ 79.95
5/32"	2"	ZF326 - \$ 75.95	ZU326 - \$ 91.95	ZG326 - \$107.95
3/16"	1 1/2"	ZF416 - \$ 66.95	ZU416 - \$ 78.95	ZG416 - \$ 90.95
3/16"	2"	ZF426 - \$ 86.95	ZU426 - \$102.95	ZG426 - \$118.95

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GC111	.378"	.218"	.062"	1.29
GC121	.415"	.255"	.062"	1.29
GC102	.454"	.258"	.078"	1.29

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FF271	Solar Flare	5/16"	T8	2.49
FF273	Gear	5/16"	T8	2.49
FF275	Bullseye	5/16"	T8	2.49
FF276	Cosmos	5/16"	T8	2.49
FF277	Texas Star	5/16"	T8	2.49

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# TOOL OF CHOICE

HOW ONE HUNTER CHOOSES THE RIGHT KNIFE FOR THE JOB — AND HOW YOU CAN, TOO

STORY AND PHOTOS BY STEVEN PAUL BARLOW

**DO you have a lucky hunting knife?**

I've been accused of changing hunting knives as often as I change my socks. That might be a slight exaggeration, but I have used many hunting knives over the years. Some were excellent, some merely serviceable, others never met expectations.

46 KNIVES ILLUSTRATED • JULY-AUGUST 2015

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## HOW I GOT STARTED

My first-ever big-game knife was a Buck 110 Folding Hunter. I had it with me when I shot my first buck. I'm sure many hunters can say that because Buck has sold tons of them since they were introduced in 1963.

The knife is sturdy and handsome too, with its brass bolsters and wood grip panels. It's heavy by today's standards, but its heftiness feels good in the hand. The clip point blade is great for detail work in tight places. Best of all, it has always been affordable. I own several, but the first is still my lucky knife and my sentimental favorite.

## ON TO OTHER BLADES

I can never resist looking for something newer and better. As a result, I've accumulated hunting knives in virtually every blade length and configuration.

Another folding knife I used for years was a rubber-gripped Camillus folding hunter with three locking blades: a clip blade, bone saw, and blunt-tipped blade for "unzipping" the game.

## SIZE MATTERS

Field-dressing game, especially big game, can be messy work. While I love my folders, fixed-blade knives are stronger and are easier to clean.

For me, the most useful size for an all-around hunting knife is somewhere between 3.5 and 4 inches. A knife in that size



Among the author's current favorite knives for hunting are (from top) the Canal Street Cutlery Trailing Drop Point; TOPS Skinat; CRKT Saker; Kershaw Field Knife; Benchmade Contego; and Buck Woodsman.



Some of the author's favorite folders for small game include: (clockwise from top) an old Camillus with separate locking straight edge and serrated blades; Remington Waterfowl knife with straight edge blade, serrated blade and choke tube wrench and pin punch for Remington's 870 pump shotgun; and Case Copperlock.

**"WHILE I LOVE MY FOLDERS, FIXED-BLADE KNIVES ARE STRONGER AND ARE EASIER TO CLEAN."**



## AUTHOR'S CHOICE

If I had to choose a half-dozen knives to last the rest of my days, what would they be? The answer might change tomorrow, but here are my picks at the moment:

**1 TOPS SKINAT.** This is perhaps my favorite all-around hunting knife. It has a 3.9-inch drop-point blade and a thick enough grip for serious work. At a suggested \$139, it won't break the bank either. I have two of them.

**2 KERSHAW FIELD KNIFE, MODEL 1082.** This is one of the sharpest knives out of the box that I've ever owned. Its 3 1/4-inch curvy blade is very thin, but it's perfect for game, from squirrels to deer. Its orange G10 grip panels help you to keep an eye on it. It weighs only 2.6 ounces. The price is light, too. I got mine through Knife Works for \$34.95. Kershaw discontinued this model. I need to talk to them about that.

**3 CANAL STREET CUTLERY TRAILING DROP POINT.** This is a classy and supremely well-made hunting knife with a 3.4-inch blade. It looks great, but can take the hard work. Mine has amber stag bone grip panels. At a suggested \$145, it's worth every penny.

**4 BUCK WOODSMAN.** This has been a steady performer for years. It has a four-inch clip blade. The suggested price is \$75, but you can find it for less and it's a good value. It has processed a lot of venison.

**5 CRKT SAKER.** Columbia River Knife & Tool markets this new Abe Elias design as a survival knife, but it makes an excellent hunting knife as well. Its blade is a bit longer at 4.5 inches, but this knife can do it all for a suggested \$125.

**6 BENCHMADE CONTEGO.** This is a large folder has a 3.9-inch blade. I have the Knife Works exclusive version with attractive blue and black G10 grip panels. Its grip is partially open at the back, making it easier to clean. It's pricey at \$195, but I couldn't resist this one.

Excellent folders the author has used as hunting knives include: (clockwise from top) the Buck 110 Folding Hunter; Remington Big Game Knife; and Camillus 3-blade lockback hunter.



range is plenty big enough to field-dress a deer. Yet it's small and handy enough to clean a rabbit or to breast out a duck or a grouse.

### GUT HOOKS AND OTHER GADGETS

I have knives with built-in gut hooks on the back of the blades. They do work, but I've field-dressed enough deer now that I don't feel they're necessary. A simple knife is all I need. I don't need gadgets.

### OTHER EDGED TOOLS

While hunting, you might need an edged tool for something other than field-dressing game. So I sometimes carry a larger bushcraft knife, machete, hatchet or folding saw, too.

The machete is useful for clearing trails and shooting lanes. Because I often hunt in remote areas, it's com-



The TOPS Skinat is probably the author's all-around favorite fixed blade hunting knife. Its configuration helps keep the knife from slipping forward in the hand and its linen Micarta grip is wide enough to be controllable and comfortable.

**"FOR ME, THE MOST USEFUL SIZE FOR AN ALL-AROUND HUNTING KNIFE IS SOMEWHERE BETWEEN 3.5 AND 4 INCHES."**





Other edged tools the author uses during hunting trips include: (from left) the Gerber Bear Grylls Compact Parang; Outdoor Edge Flip 'n' Saw; Buck hatchet, Ontario sawback machete; Estwing hatchet; Wyoming saw; and Gerber Gator Machete Pro.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION...

#### BENCHMADE

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[www.Remington.com](http://www.Remington.com)

#### TOPS KNIVES

[www.TOPSKnives.com](http://www.TOPSKnives.com)

## QUICK TIPS

What should you look for in a hunting knife? Here are some things to consider:

**1** What type of hunting are you doing? If you're hunting small game, a simple pocket folder will do. I've used a Remington Waterfowl folding knife that features a choke tube wrench for my 870 pump shotgun.

If you're going to be deer hunting and processing the venison yourself, a wider fixed blade with some belly will help with the skinning task. For an all-around hunting knife, one with a blade 3.5 to 4 inches in length is ideal.

**2** Where are you going to hunt? For hunts close to home, a mid-sized locking folder or fixed blade knife will do fine. For hunting remote areas, you might want to add a larger knife or hatchet to your kit.

**3** Pick a good blade. Drop points are stronger, but clip points handle detail work better. Carbon blades sharpen easier and are useful if you need a spark with a flint. Stainless blades handle wet weather better. Clean and oil your knives regularly and rust shouldn't be an issue with either.

**4** Pick a comfortable handle. For greater control and comfort in hard use, I prefer a grip that fills the hand. Try-before-you-buy is recommended.



forting to know that I also have a hatchet or folding saw in my pack in case my hunt suddenly becomes a survival situation. They are useful too in fashioning a travois for dragging out a heavy deer.

Steven Paul Barlow has been writing on outdoor topics for more than 30 years. He is the editor of several Engaged Media publications, including *Modern Sporting Rifles*, *Tactical World* and *Gunslingers*. **KI**



The Benchmade Contego, while designed as more of a tactical knife, would make an excellent hunting knife as well. The contoured G10 scales and jimping on the liners and backspacer allow for a sure grip. The reverse tanto blade would perform field-dressing tasks easily.



Other edged tools the author uses during hunting trips include: (from top) Estwing hatchet; Outdoor Edge Flip 'n' Saw; Wyoming saw; and Ontario machete.

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# HOW TO...

## Get The Most Out Of Your Hunting Blades

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JIM ANKERSON

**PREPAREDNESS** is key in any adventure, and hunting is no exception.

When you're getting your equipment ready for the upcoming hunting season, don't overlook your knives, which need the same care and attention as the rest of your gear to perform at their full potential.





**"A DULL KNIFE IS USELESS IN  
THE FIELD, SO SHARPENING  
AND REMOVING CHIPS IN THE  
EDGE MUST BE A PRIORITY."**







The author's hunting knives and leather sheath.



Various sharpening equipment.





Knives sprayed down with WD-40.

### 1 Clean and Inspect

When you first pull out your knife, give both it and your sheath a thorough look over for any rust, scratches, dullness or

other areas in need of tuning up. Next, lay out a towel and spray the whole thing down with WD-40. Let it sit for awhile, then brush everything down with an old toothbrush.



The leather sheath after being cleaned and treated with protective oil.



A hunting folder after cleaning.



## GATHER

Items you'll need to prepare your knife:

- Clean rags
- Toothbrush
- WD-40 spray
- Metal polish
- Leather cleaner
- Linseed oil
- 3-In-One oil (stainless steel only)
- PAM cooking spray (non-stainless only)



An array of cleaning supplies and lubricants.

**"WHILE THERE ARE MANY METHODS OF PREVENTING RUST, I PREFER TO KEEP THINGS SIMPLE."**

This loosens up old dirt and grime to be wiped easily away. Be sure to dry the knife well.

## 2 Sharpen, Repair, Remove

A dull knife is useless in the field, so sharpening and removing chips in the edge must be a priority. I test my blades out on phone book paper; if they don't

slice through easily, give them a good sharpen. (For tips on proper sharpening techniques, check out the December 2014 issue of *Knives Illustrated*.)

Next, look for oxidation on the brass or, if you have a folder, the bolsters. Should you find any, a bit of metal polish should do the trick. A little more WD-40, meanwhile, will remove any rust.



The author's knives cleaned up and ready for action.



**"DON'T NEGLECT YOUR SHEATH! IT SHOULD BE CLEANED AND, IF IT'S LEATHER, PROTECTED."**

### PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

At the end of the season, before storing your knives, be sure to clean your knives, inspect them for damage and repair as needed, and add a bit of rust protection.

Don't neglect your sheath! It should be cleaned and, if it's leather, protected. Kydex can be merely washed and dried, while leather should be treated with a leather cleaner and linseed oil.

### 3 Lubricate and Protect

While there are many methods of preventing rust, I prefer to keep things simple. On stainless steel, I use a coat of WD-40 and 3-in-One oil for lubrication and basic rust prevention. I'll then leave the knife out to dry. On non-stainless blades, I use PAM cooking spray and wipe off, but leave a very thin coating.

It's best to keep lubrication to a minimum on folders, as they don't need much and overuse will attract dirt. I generally use a compressed air can to spray out any excess oil and wipe the knife after.

### 4 Maintain in the Field

If you follow the previous three steps properly, your knife shouldn't need too much care in the field. The main

thing to pay attention to is keeping the knife dry and sharp if you're out for long periods of time. It's smart to take at least a small sharpening stone or rod with you for quick touchups.

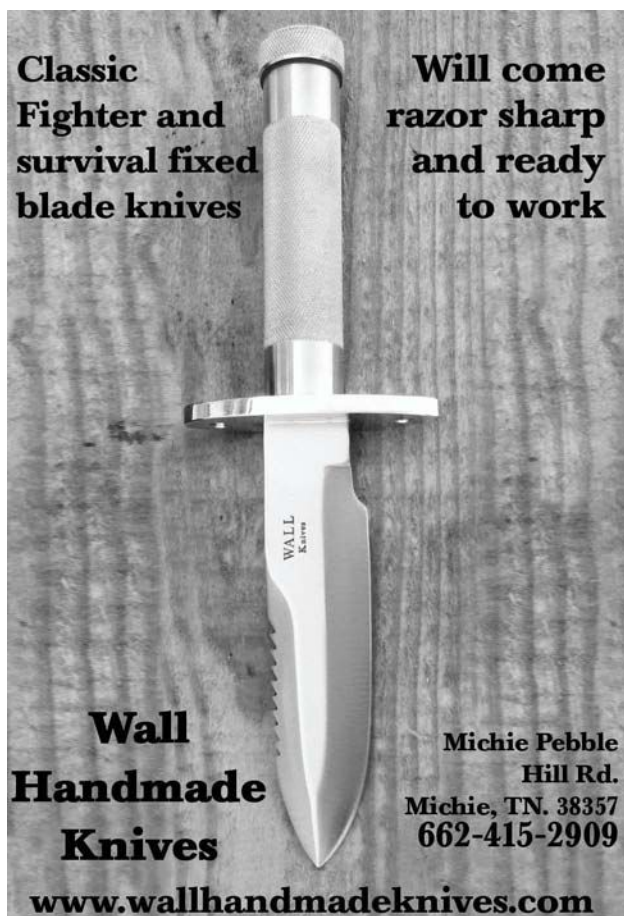
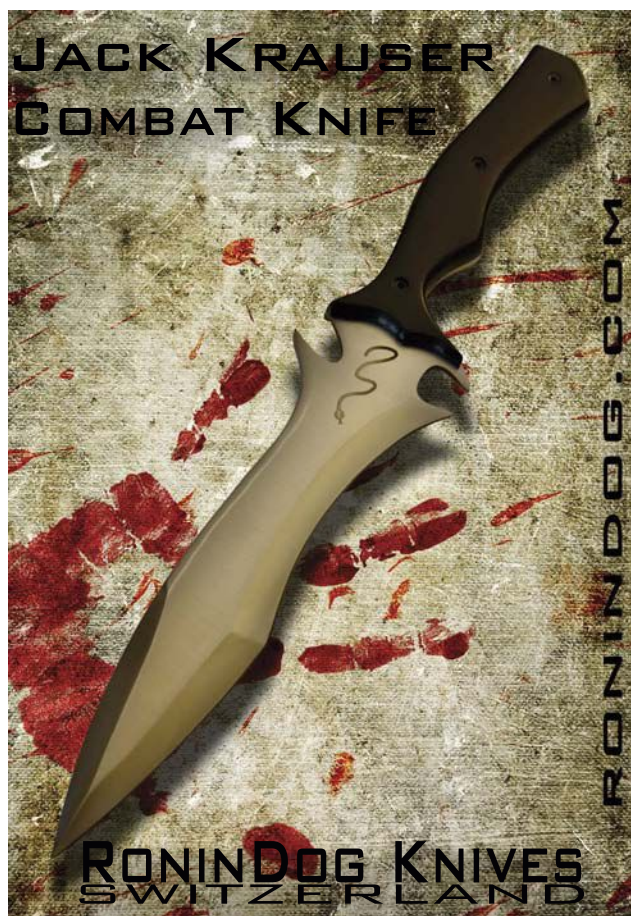
In bad weather, remove the knife from the sheath. Leather retains water, so let your knife air dry before you put it back in. Kydex, on the other hand, dries quickly, so simply drain the sheath.

Be sure to clean any animal blood off your blade as soon as possible after use, otherwise the blade will rust quickly.

Follow these tips, and your knife is sure to perform its best when you need it most. **KI**

### BREAKDOWN

1. Clean and inspect for dullness, rust or damage.
2. Sharpen and remove rust and oxidation.
3. Lubricate and add rust protection.
4. Keep the knife clean and dry in the field.





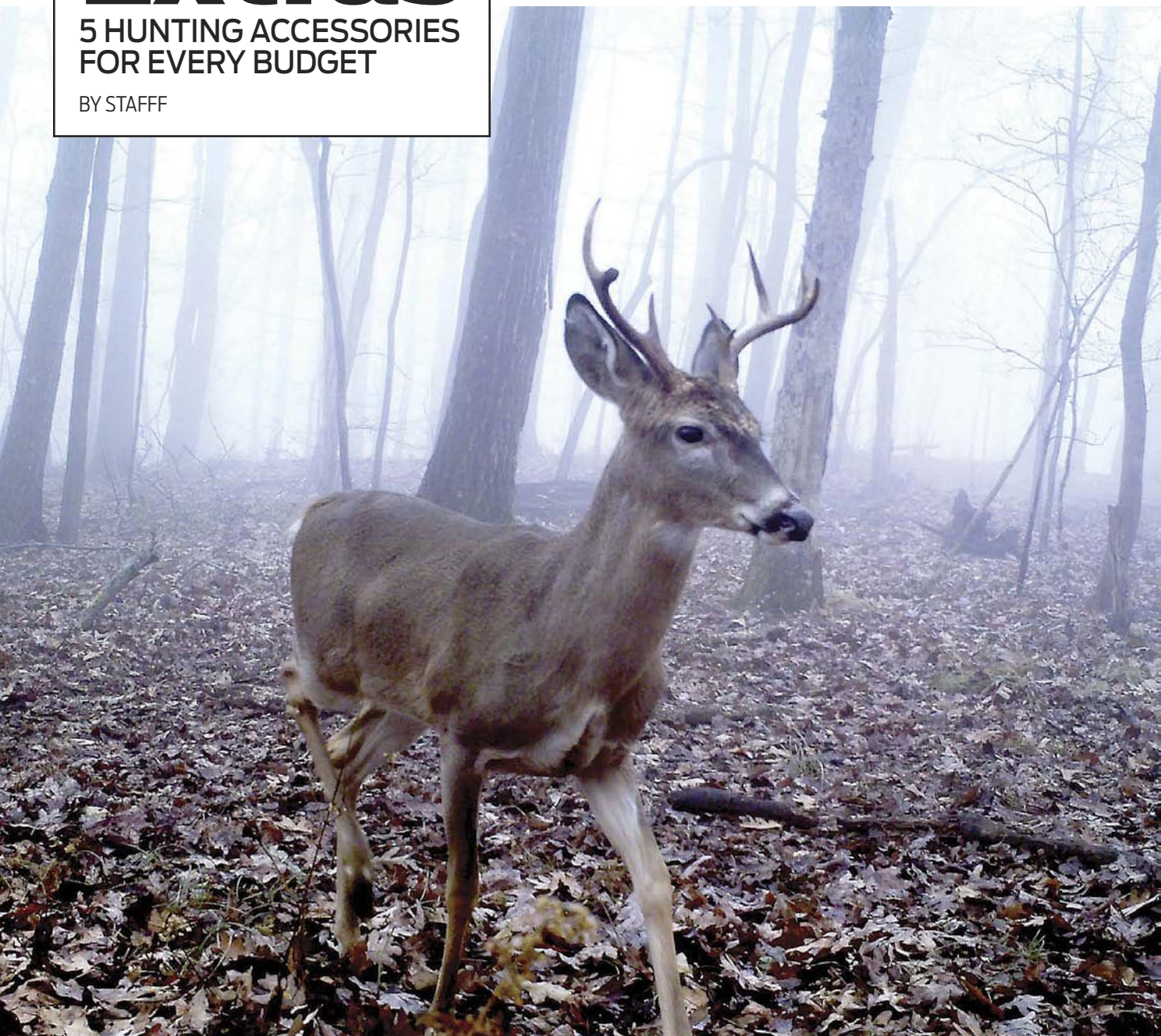
# BELLS & WHISTLES

## Exceptional Extras

5 HUNTING ACCESSORIES  
FOR EVERY BUDGET

BY STAFF

**YOU'VE** got your gun, you've got your knife — you're just about ready to venture out on the first hunt of the season. But there are just a few more accoutrements you may find useful for tasks like cleaning your trophy or camping overnight. Here are a few of our picks that, at under \$60, give you plenty of bang for your buck.





### **1 BUCK KNIVES 737 BOW TOOL**

Bow hunters won't want to head out into the field without this compact multipurpose tool. Equipped with 10 Allen hex drivers, scissors and a 2-inch blade, this lightweight-pocket sized package gives you just about everything you'll need for on-the-go maintenance. The blade is chrome vanadium coated with black oxide, while the handle is milled G10.

**MSRP: \$38**



### **2 CRKT HOIST'N'LOK**

Hanging your large game is easier than ever, thanks to this patented pulley system designed by expert outdoorsman Russ Kommer. The 6160 aircraft aluminum pulley uses an innovative locking mechanism that makes hoisting up to 500 pounds a one-man, knot-free job. The system includes two load-bearing carabiners, 40 feet of nylon rope and a 6.5-foot nylon strap with ratchet.

**MSRP: \$59.99**





### 3 GERBER VITAL POCKET FOLDER

While you rely on your primary knife for heavy-duty tasks, the exchangeable-bladed Vital is an excellent side companion for smaller utility tasks, or even chores like skinning, in a pinch. Replacing the #60 razor blades requires no extra tools — simply snap into place — and the rubber overmolded handle in high-visibility orange is impressively comfortable to use. And at 1.3 ounces, it won't weigh you down.

**MSRP: \$49**



### 4 REMINGTON NIGHT SEEKER 2 COMBO

You can let this little LED light shine hands-free — a significant convenience when you have your hands full of a gun or bow. Until you need it, the 3.2-ounce Night Seeker rides inconspicuously in your pocket. When you do need it, it clips easily onto the brim of your cap. The lithium battery can last as long as 48 hours on the lowest setting, and its angle is easily adjustable. Pair it with a matching simple backup folder for a winning combination.

**MSRP: \$19.99**





## 5 TOPS MULTI-FUEL FOLDING STOVE

If you're heading out for an overnight hunting expedition, this small collapsible stove will prove a handy asset without weighing you down. Weighing just over a pound, the five pieces are easily carried in an included nylon pouch, and just as easily assembled in a matter of minutes. The fuel plate can accommodate anything from a Sterno to fuel tablets.

**MSRP: \$50** 

### CONTACT

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*"In the Field" is a new column featuring real-world stories from knife users.*

**"JOHNSON STOOD PRACTICING WITH THE KNIFE, IMAGINING HOW HE WOULD USE IT IF HE GOT BLOOD ON HIS HANDS."**

STORY BY DANIEL JACKSON  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF BRANDON JOHNSON  
AND CHRISTY URICK

# The Crucial Moment

## SAVED BY THE KNIFE

**THE** bear hit Brandon Johnson so hard he dropped his flashlight and his headlamp flew off.

At first he thought it was a crazy dream. Deep in the woods, just moments ago, he had been helping his friend track an arrowed bear during a hot September night of Michigan bow season.

The next moment, the bear's tooth bit into Johnson's jaw. Then he realized: His right hand still grasped his knife.

A few weeks before, Johnson's hunting buddy, Trevor Nowack, bought a hollow-handled survival knife at a flea market for \$12. When Nowack arrowed the bear 30 minutes before darkness fell, he planned to use the knife for the first time.

But as they followed the blood trail, the hunters heard the snap of a branch.

"Do you have a knife?" Johnson asked Nowack. Johnson left his hunting gear back at the cabin, thinking this was a quick excursion to find a dead bear.

Nowack pulled the knife from his backpack. "Yeah, do you want it?"

### A HELPING HAND

Currently, Johnson's hunting buddies are collecting donations to cover his medical expenses. If you'd like to donate, search for "Brandon's Bear Benefit" on fundraising website [www.YouCaring.com](http://www.YouCaring.com).



Trevor Nowack, Johnson's hunting companion, kneels next to the bear that nearly killed his friend.





Brandon Johnson and his fiancée, Tracy Hofmann

## LESSONS LEARNED

From being attacked by a bear, Brandon Johnson learned...

1. To get a sheath knife. When he returns to the woods, he will carry a fixed blade knife on his side. It's best in a survival situation, he said.
2. That to deliver the most power, he stabbed in a downward motion. "The only way to make it work was to put the thumb on the butt of the knife for extra power and so the knife wouldn't slide through if it got bloody."

## "JOHNSON SWITCHED THE GRIP ON THE KNIFE, POINT UP, AND STABBED THE BEAR THROUGH THE MOUTH."

Johnson stood practicing with the knife, imagining how he would use it if he got blood on his hands.

"I don't know why I did that," Johnson would later explain. "I never practiced with a knife in my life."

### KNIFE SPECS

**MAKER:** Tiger-USA

**STEEL:** 1045 German surgical steel

**BLADE LENGTH:** 5.58 inches

**HANDLE:** Hollow handle, with compass

**PRICE:** \$12

Five minutes later, he found himself on his back, with a bear atop him.

Johnson's left arm went into the bear's mouth, and he swung the knife, blade down. Three times the bear attacked. Two times, the bear grabbed his left arm and shook him like a rag doll. Two times, Johnson stabbed and stabbed.

The bear would leave and Nowack who stood nearby would shout, "Brandon, is the bear gone?"

"[Brandon] wouldn't answer me," Nowack remembered. "And suddenly, the

noise would start again."

Johnson's left arm lay useless when the bear attacked for the third time. He switched the grip on the knife, point up, and stabbed the bear through the mouth.

Johnson fell back. He waved the knife in the bear's face, but both arms were broken. The bear slashed him across the chest and retreated.


When Johnson blacked out, he still held onto the knife.

Another hunting buddy managed to get through the brush to join Nowack. When they located Johnson, the bear was nowhere to be found.

They picked up the knife, cutting drag rope to make tourniquets. The trip out of the woods took four and a half hours, the two other men supporting a bleeding, stumbling Johnson. An ambulance's sirens wailed in the blackness, guiding the hunters to help.

The next day, with Johnson in the hospital, Nowack returned to search for the bear. He found it, 50 yards away from where it attacked, dead.

These days, Johnson has limited use of his arms — a problem, as he works as a general contractor. "The doctor says I should be looking for something else, but no one knows the outcome," Johnson said. He is confident he will return to the woods, where he plans to hunt bears again.

"I would not be here if it were not for the knife," Johnson said. "God was definitely watching over me." 



Brandon Johnson's Tiger USA fixed-blade literally saved his life during a close encounter with a bear.





# CUSTOM QUALITY

## CUCHILLERIA ARTESANAL SOBRAL KNIVES FEATURE GREAT LOOKS, ERGONOMICS

WRITTEN BY LES ROBERTSON  
PHOTOS BY CHUCK WARD

**IN** the town of Villa Ballester, a suburb of Buenos Aires, Argentina, one can find the Sobral Custom Knives shop. Three brothers, for the last 10 years, have worked hard to turn this hobby into a business, and the world is noticing.

### HOBBY BECAME A BUSINESS

In 1994, Claudio, the older brother, started working for a firearms manufacturer. Working there he learned skills that would eventually translate into a new career. After the factory closed, Claudio and his brother, Ariel, joined forces and started a graphics business.

In 2005, Claudio started making knives as a hobby. Attending local shows and giving knives to friends and family members, he discovered the knives were received with high praise. As the word





## CONTACT INFORMATION

### WEBSITE

CASKnives.com

### EMAIL

Claudio at clacuchillos@live.com.ar

### FACEBOOK

Search for "CAS knives"  
in products/services

## ANDES FIGHTER

**BLADE LENGTH:** 8.5 inches

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 13.5 inches

**BLADE STEEL:** San Mai

**BLADE FINISH:** Satin

**GUARD MATERIAL:** Stainless steel

**HANDLE MATERIAL:** Black Micarta

**SHEATH:** Custom made by Marcelo

**AS WITH MANY NEW MAKERS, THE BROTHERS SOBRAL EMBRACED THE INTERNET AS THE BEST WAY TO PROMOTE THEIR KNIVES —BOTH LOCALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY.**



## RL FIGHTER

**BLADE LENGTH:** 8.5 inches

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 13.5 inches

**BLADE STEEL:** San Mai

**BLADE FINISH:** Satin

**GUARD MATERIAL:** Stainless steel

**HANDLE MATERIAL:** Stag

**SHEATH:** Custom made by Marcelo Sobral



spread about his knives, the orders started to increase. Eventually, the demand grew to the point in which they closed the graphics business and knife making became Claudio's new profession.

Ariel then joined Claudio. Not only did he help with business management, he started making the handles. With that, Cuchilleria Artesanal Sobral was born.

### MODERN TECHNOLOGY

As with many new makers, the brothers Sobral embraced the Internet as the best way to promote their knives—both locally and internationally. As orders grew, so did the need for the staff. In early 2013,

## IN ADDITION TO SAN MAI, THEY MAKE THEIR OWN DAMASCUS NOT ONLY FOR BLADES BUT FOR GUARDS AND POMMELS AS WELL.

younger brother Marcelo joined the team and became their sheath maker, creating a new look for the company.

### STYLES

Often items are said to have the “look,” and the look is an appropriate description for CAS knives. From the point of the

blade to the pommel of the handle, all of their knives have that flow that is an element of the look. The combination of steel, guard and handle materials complete the look.

The Sobral's primarily use san mai steel for their knives; basically, this is three pieces of steel stainless steel on the outside with a carbon steel core. The forging of this combination of steels leaves the very distinct hamon-like contrast. San mai steel provides the advantage of excellent cutting with a high degree of rust resistance. Minimal maintenance of the edge will keep the blade rust free.

The combination of the contrast of the



## STAG BOWIE

**BLADE LENGTH:** 10 inches

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 15 inches

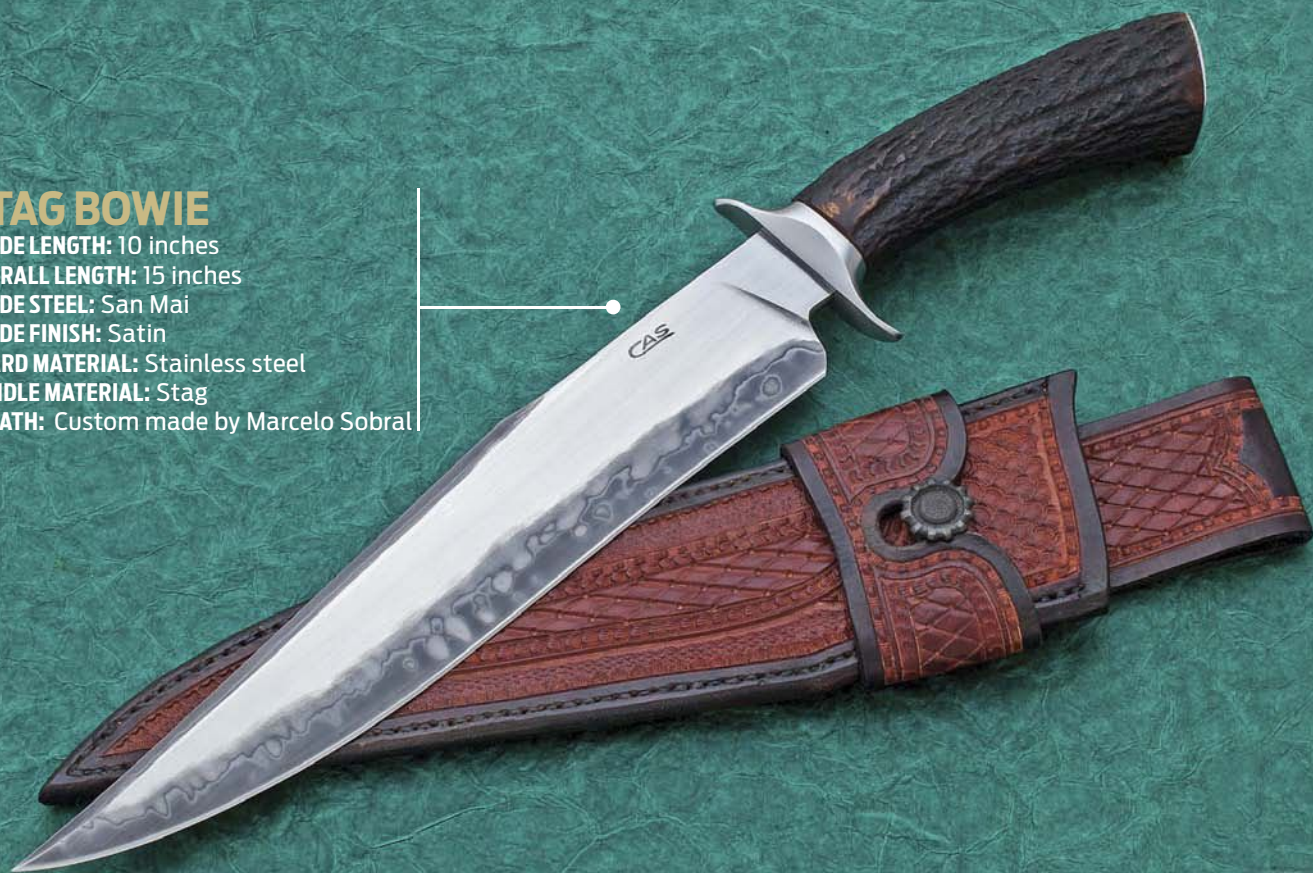
**BLADE STEEL:** San Mai

**BLADE FINISH:** Satin

**GUARD MATERIAL:** Stainless steel

**HANDLE MATERIAL:** Stag

**SHEATH:** Custom made by Marcelo Sobral



blade, stainless steel guard and black Micarta handle provides the unique combination of an esthetically pleasing working knife.

The construction technique used for these knives provides them with great balance and superior handle ergonomics. A comfortable handle cannot be overrated for a working knife.

In addition to san mai, they make their own Damascus not only for blades but for guards and pommels as well. Because of the difficulty of getting woods like desert ironwood into the country, that is not something they offer at this time. However, they do offer exceptional stag as an

additional choice for handle material.


Combined with their steel choices, what attracted me to their knives were the variety of sizes and styles. CAS offers hunters, fighters, sub-hilt fighters and Bowies. As custom knife makers, they are happy to discuss with customers a specific design or a modification to an existing design they currently make.

Pricing starts at \$400 for a stag handled hunter and goes up from there, depending on style and materials. Delivery times vary. I can tell you from personal experience when they give you a delivery date you can count on it. You can check out their past and current work on their

CAS Knives on Facebook. Keep in mind they do not speak English and use a translator on the computer.

### THE RIGHT CHOICE

If you appreciate a fine big blade, then I heartily recommend you look into obtaining a knife from CAS. The quality of their work belies the price you will pay for it. They offer a nice variety of styles and knives with great looks and ergonomics. Simply put, you cannot go wrong with a knife from the brothers Sobral.

*The Author: Les Robertson is a regular contributor to Knives Illustrated.* 



## BOWIE

**BLADE LENGTH:** 10 inches

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 15 inches

**BLADE STEEL:** San Mai

**BLADE FINISH:** Satin

**GUARD MATERIAL:** Stainless steel

**HANDLE MATERIAL:** Black Micarta

**SHEATH:** Custom-made leather sheath by Marcelo Sobral







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Chris Reeve  
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A drop point and enough belly for skinning makes the Nyala useful in a multitude of applications. The integral handle and blade is sturdy and practical.



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# Master Craftsman

## ANDRE THORBURN'S CUSTOM KNIVES FEATURE OUTSTANDING QUALITY AT A REASONABLE PRICE

STORY BY LES ROBERTSON  
PHOTOS BY JIM COOPER

**FOR most of us, our initial interaction with a custom knife is visual.**

While looking, the following thoughts immediately run through our minds: Does the knife design flow from the tip of the blade to the end of the knife? Do the materials look good together, and do they meet our desires on a particular knife?

If the answers are yes, we move to the next step in the custom knife "flowchart," which means handling the knife.

Upon holding it, more questions flood your mind. How does the knife feel? Is it smooth when you open it, and does it lock up tight? Does the folder inspire confidence? Can you use it without the blade closing on your fingers?

When you inspect the knives of South Africa's Andre Thorburn, the answers are definitely yes.

### MASTER CRAFTSMAN

Andre Thorburn has been building knives for the last 23 years, and he has concentrated on folders for the last 10 years.

How To Contact Him

**WEBSITE:** [www.thorinox.co.za](http://www.thorinox.co.za)

**EMAIL:** [andrethorburn@gmail.com](mailto:andrethorburn@gmail.com)





## L51

**BLADE LENGTH:** 3.75 inches

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 8.75 inches

**BLADE STEEL:** M390

**HANDLE MATERIAL:** Silver Lightning  
Strike carbon fiber

**BOLSTER:** Black zirconium (textured by  
Marietjie)

**COMMENTS:** Flipper opener, 3-D  
titanium pocket clip, tip-up carry



## SHOW SCHEDULE

East Coast Custom Knife Show  
Blade Show  
KGSA Show (South Africa)  
USN Gathering Show  
NYCK Show



### L36MF

**BLADE LENGTH:** 3.8 inches

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 8.71 inches

**BLADE STEEL:** M390

**HANDLE MATERIAL:** Carbon fiber

**COMMENTS:** Flipper opener,  
carbon fiber clip, tip-up carry

Smooth is the word that best describes opening one of Andre's folders. You feel the blade break from the detent, and the blade, seemingly instantaneously, is locked solidly into place.

Upon closer inspection, you will appreciate the excellent fit and finish on the knife. His folders are extremely comfort-

able in the hand. There are no sharp edges or corners; all aspects fit together. One would expect nothing less from a master craftsman.

### MATERIALS, EMBELLISHMENTS

Andre offers two types of flipper openers. One is the more traditional type of the

opener that sticks out of the top of the frame. He also offers a front flipper, which at first can be a little clumsy to open. With a little practice, however, the knives open with ease. To do so, you can utilize your index finger or your thumb.

Andre recognized the brilliant liner lock design of Michael Walker, and he employs





### L28SFF

**BLADE LENGTH:** 2 inches

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 4 inches

**BLADE STEEL:** RWL34

**HANDLE MATERIAL:** Bow tie zirconium and desert ironwood inlays

**COMMENTS:** Front flipper opener, zirconium clip, tip-up carry

this system in all of his folders. His folders feature titanium liners and lock. All of his liners feature decorative milling of the liners unless the client specifically asks for none.

Like most professional custom knife makers, Andre offers a wide variety of steels. N690 is his standard steel, but he also uses RWL34, M390, Damasteel and some CPM steels, depending on the client's requirements.

Heat treatment of the blades is done in house. To obtain optimal results, each blade is tested on the Rockwell tester. Blades are also randomly selected and then broken to check their strength.

**DID YOU KNOW ?**  
Andre's basic tactical folder starts at \$650.

### HANDLES

Synthetic materials for the handle scales are offered on the base models, and handle material and embellishment options are offered, but these will increase the price. Andre makes a few very high-end folders featuring natural handle material, gold inlay and Julien Marchal's engraving. Thorburn's wife, Marietjie, provides embellishment of texturing or stippling on the bolsters.

### FINAL THOUGHTS

With the prices found today on many of the tactical folders, Andre's knives are an exceptional bargain. His craftsmanship is far superior to many of the makers building tactical folders at much higher prices.

The combination of materials, craftsmanship and price will make one of Andre Thorburn's knives a welcome addition to any collection. **(K)**

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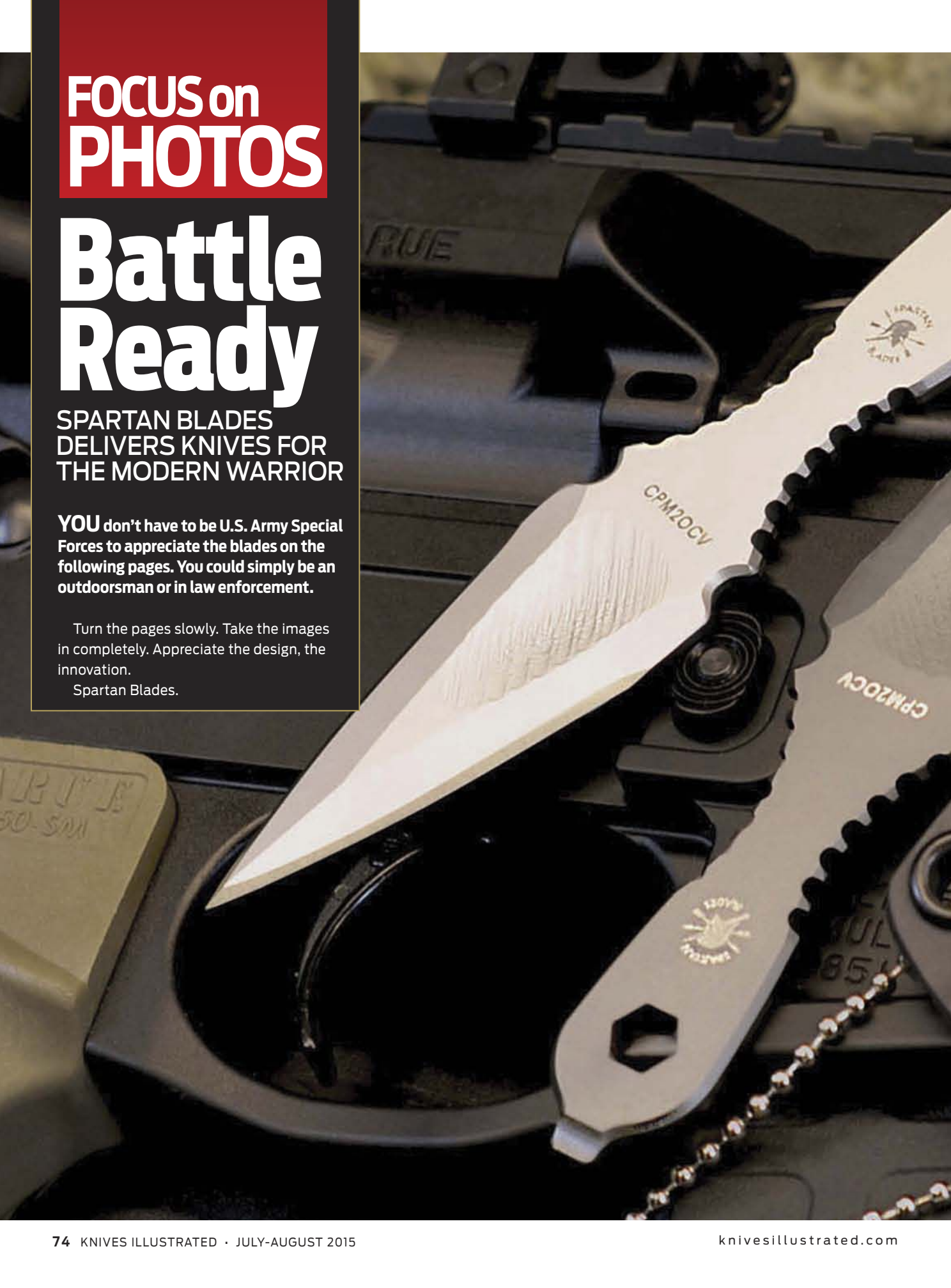
# Battle Ready

SPARTAN BLADES  
DELIVERS KNIVES FOR  
THE MODERN WARRIOR

**YOU** don't have to be U.S. Army Special Forces to appreciate the blades on the following pages. You could simply be an outdoorsman or in law enforcement.

Turn the pages slowly. Take the images in completely. Appreciate the design, the innovation.

Spartan Blades.







## VELOS-EDC LAPEL DAGGER TOOL

**PRICE:** \$95

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 4 7/16 inches

**BLADE LENGTH:** 2 1/8 inches

**BLADE THICKNESS:** 3/16 inch

**WEIGHT:** 0.063 pounds





### ENYO INSIDE WAIST BAND/ NECK KNIFE EDC

**PRICE:** \$150

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 6 ¼ inches

**BLADE LENGTH:** 2 11/16 inches

**BLADE THICKNESS:** 3/16 inch

**WEIGHT:** 0.176 pounds



### CQB TOOL

**PRICE:** \$160

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 6 15/16 inches

**BLADE LENGTH:** 2 7/8 inches

**WEIGHT:** 0.126 pounds





### ARES FIGHTER/ COMBAT UTILITY

**PRICE:** \$330

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 10 ½ inches

**BLADE LENGTH:** 5 3/8 inches

**WEIGHT:** 0.422 pounds



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**BLADE LENGTH:** 4.25 inches

**WEIGHT:** 0.244 pounds

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**PRICE:** \$330

**OVERALL LENGTH:** 10 7/8 inches

**BLADE LENGTH:** 5 11/16 inches

**WEIGHT:** 0.556 pounds (K)





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(plus shipping)

Shown here with optional  
stand, LCD monitor, machine  
arms, and accessories.



Follow knifemaker John Grimsmo as he makes his own knives with a PCNC 1100 on his web series, Knifemaking Tuesdays, at [www.tormach.com/kmt](http://www.tormach.com/kmt).



Grimsmo Knives milling a fixed blade, called The Tor, on a Tormach PCNC 1100.

[www.tormach.com/knives](http://www.tormach.com/knives)

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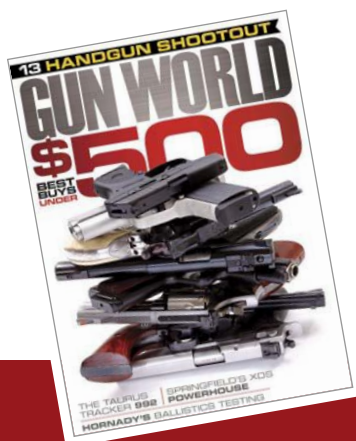


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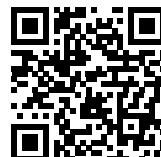


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"On the Edge" is a new regular column highlighting new, upcoming and lesser-known knife makers.

## UNEXPECTED Journey

### DAN EASTLAND'S DOGWOOD CUSTOM KNIVES

STORY BY JOSHUA SWANAGON  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF DAN EASTLAND

**IN 2011, Pennsylvania furniture maker Dan Eastland wandered into a blacksmith shop looking for a torch stand — a casual visit that unexpectedly sparked an interest in the blacksmith arts.**



Dan Eastland's Huntsman line

**"HAVING USED  
EASTLAND'S KNIVES  
MYSELF IN THE AMAZON  
JUNGLE, I CAN ATTEST TO  
THEIR HIGH QUALITY..."**


After coming back the following Saturday to make a knife with the blacksmith, the seed was planted and Dogwood Custom Knives was born. Shortly after, the blacksmith moved and Eastland contacted the Georgia Knifemakers' Guild, beginning a year-long apprenticeship with Andy Roy of Fiddleback Forge before setting out on his own.

Eastland has spent a great deal of time studying trade knives of the late 1800s and early 1900s, but also draws inspiration from Bob Loveless and interviews with chefs, butchers, wood carvers, as well as his own background.

Although Eastland prefers to let the intended use of the knife drive his steel choices, he tends toward crucible steels with an emphasis on CPM-154 and has been looking into working with alloys. Drawing on his experience in engineering, Dan puts a focus on the intended use of his knives before starting the design process, favoring working blades with clean lines and an emphasis on outdoor and kit knives.

Although he prefers stock removal because it allows him to work with advanced alloys, Eastland has forged a few knives, putting into practice his belief that all knifemakers should have this ability.

All of Eastland's knives are hand-made but he is working on a line of production knives based on his custom work. He can do custom one-offs with a current back order of eight months, but he is currently working on new production procedures to cut down on the wait time.

Having used Eastland's knives myself in the Amazon jungle, I can attest to their high quality and would recommend them to anyone. 

### FIND DAN EASTLAND

**WEBSITE:** [www.DogwoodCustomKnives.com](http://www.DogwoodCustomKnives.com)  
**FACEBOOK:** Search "Dogwood Custom Knives"



# CARVIN' JACK COLLECTION™

Made in the USA for over 25 years, Flexcut carving knives offer maximum performance. The Carvin' Jack Collection™ of woodcarving jack knives feature high-carbon steel blades that are hand-sharpened to a razor finish and really hold an edge. **All products are unconditionally guaranteed or your money back.**

## Detail Jack®

### Specifications

**Blade Steel:** 1095 HC  
**Blade Length/ Type:**  
 1 ½ inch Detail Knife  
**Closed Length:** 4 ¼ inches  
**Handle Material:** 6061  
 Anodized aluminum,  
 Brass rivet fasteners  
**Blade Lock:** Liner  
**Weight:** 2.2 oz  
**MSRP:** \$39.95



## Whittlin' Jack®

### Specifications

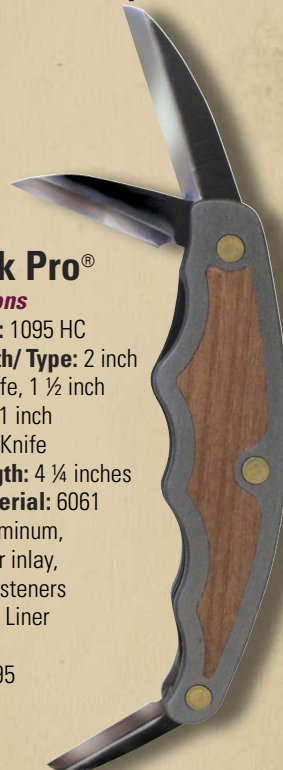
**Blade Steel:** 1095 HC  
**Blade Length/ Type:** 1 ½  
 inch Detail Knife & 2 inch  
 Roughing Knife  
**Closed Length:** 4 ¼ inches  
**Handle Material:** 6061  
 Anodized aluminum,  
 Walnut veneer inlay,  
 Brass rivet fasteners  
**Weight:** 3 oz  
**MSRP:** \$52.95



## Tri-Jack Pro®

### Specifications

**Blade Steel:** 1095 HC  
**Blade Length/ Type:** 2 inch  
 Roughing Knife, 1 ½ inch  
 Detail Knife, 1 inch  
 Mini-Cutting Knife  
**Closed Length:** 4 ¼ inches  
**Handle Material:** 6061  
 Anodized aluminum,  
 Cherry veneer inlay,  
 Brass rivet fasteners  
**Blade Lock:** Liner  
**Weight:** 4 oz  
**MSRP:** \$89.95



## Pocket Jack®

### Specifications

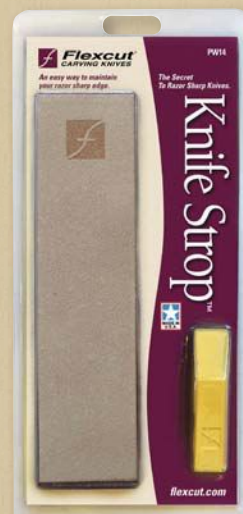
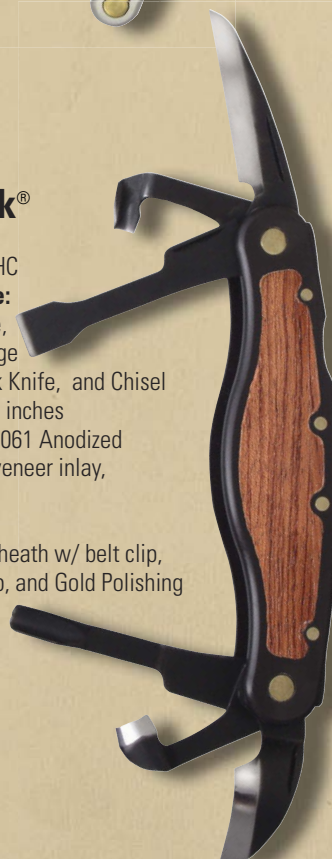
**Blade Steel:**  
 1095 HC  
**Blade Length/ Type:** 1 ½  
 inch Detail Knife, Straight  
 Gouge, Gouge Scorp,  
 and V- Scorp  
**Closed Length:** 4 ¼ inches  
**Handle Material:** 6061  
 Anodized aluminum,  
 Brass rivet fasteners  
**Blade Lock:** Clip  
**Weight:** 3 oz  
**MSRP:** \$86.95



## Carvin' Jack®

### Specifications

**Blade Steel:** 1095 HC  
**Blade Length/ Type:**  
 1 ½ inch Detail Knife,  
 Straight Gouge, Gouge  
 Scorp, V-Scorp, Hook Knife, and Chisel  
**Closed Length:** 4 ¼ inches  
**Handle Material:** 6061 Anodized  
 aluminum, Bubinga veneer inlay,  
 Brass rivet fasteners  
**Blade Lock:** Clip  
**Includes:** Leather Sheath w/ belt clip,  
 Sharpening SlipStrop, and Gold Polishing  
 Compound  
**Weight:** 3.5 oz  
**MSRP:** \$149.95



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Blade: 3 1/4" 440 Stainless

Handle: 4 1/4" Aluminum



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Handle: 4 1/2" Aluminum



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Handle: 5" Aluminum



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IMPORT



Mossy Oak® Blaze™

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### F.A.S.T.® Fixed

Model: R19761

Blade: 5 1/4" 440 Stainless

Overall: 10 1/2" Aluminum

Includes: Ballistic Sheath

[www.remingtonblades.com](http://www.remingtonblades.com)